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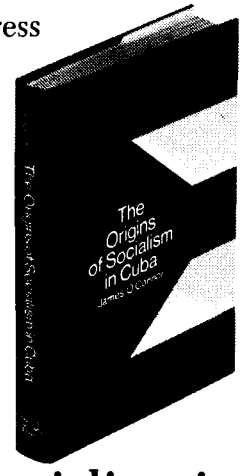

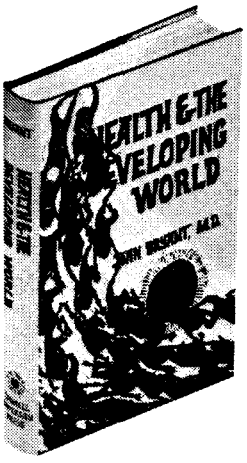

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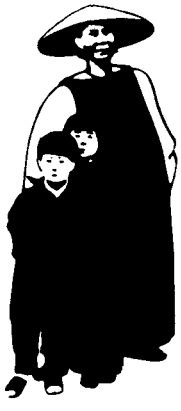

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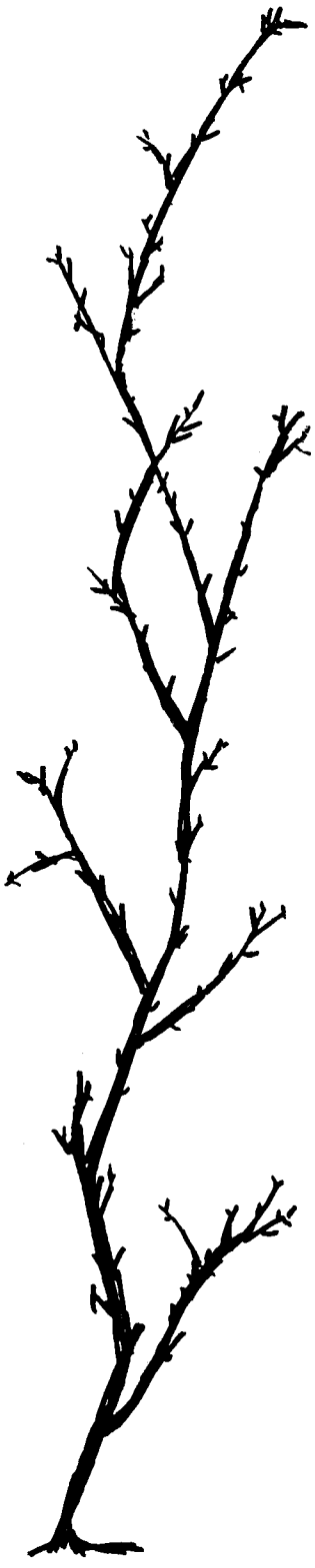

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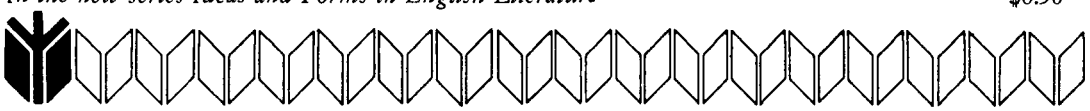

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If You Don't Mind My Saying So. . . . .

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Charles Lindbergh was recently quoted as saying that if he had to choose he would rather have birds than airplanes. This makes a splendid addition to my list (SCHOLAR, Spring, 1968) of pioneers in technology who lost their enthusiasm for its achievements once they had been exploited: Alexander Graham Bell who wouldn't have a telephone in his house; Alfred Sloane who said that he sometimes regretted that the internal combustion engine had ever been invented; and Vladimir Zworykin who, when asked his favorite TV program, replied comprehensively, "None."

Mr. Lindbergh's is a less sweeping statement. He still flies airplanes; his choice is also not one we have to make. But it does remind us that there is a more general choice which *is* obligatory: namely, the choice between some regard for the earth as nature made it and the determination to have faster airplanes, more development, so-called "reclamation," technology and so forth—even though these are creating an environment more and more restricted to the man-made, while every living thing except man is threatened with extinction. Meanwhile, man himself flourishes (if that is the word) so exuberantly that he is on the point of trampling himself to death—unless he starves or poisons himself first. How many of us would, in this symbolical sense, choose birds? A growing number certainly. Possibly enough. But at the present moment we do not seem to be. And it is good to find Mr. Lindbergh among us.

When we were in the midst of our mafficking over the moon landing, Mr. Lindbergh was asked to comment and he chose to end with the following (*Life*, July 4, 1969):

> Science and technology inform us that, after millions of years of successful evolution, human life is now deteriorating genetically and environmentally at an alarming rate. . . . That is why I have turned my attention from technological progress to life, from the civilized to the wild. In wildness there is a lens to the past, to the present and to the future, offered to us for the looking—a direction, a successful selection, an awareness of values that confronts us with the need for the means of our salvation. Let us never forget that wildness has developed life, including the human species. By comparison, our own accomplishments are trivial.
>
> If we can combine our knowledge of science with the wisdom of wildness, if we can nurture civilization through roots in the primitive, man's potentialities appear to be unbounded. Through his evolving awareness, and his awareness of that awareness, he can merge with the miraculous—to which we can attach what better name than "God"?

Mr. Lindbergh's adjuration, "Let us never forget that wildness has developed life, including the human species," and his warning that "by comparison, our own accomplishments are trivial" reminded me that Thoreau used the word "wildness" in this special sense and led me to wonder if Mr. Lindbergh had perhaps chosen it for that reason. Part of the relevant passage in Thoreau is as follows: "The West of which I speak is but another name for the Wild, and what I had been preparing to say is, that in Wildness is the preservation of the World. Every tree sends its fibers forth in search of the Wild. The cities import it at any price. Men plow and sail for it. From the forest and wilderness come the tonics and barks which brace mankind."

What I think Thoreau meant, and what it is clear that Mr. Lindbergh means, is

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that we are, after all, the creation of those forces we know so little about that we are compelled to call them simply "Nature." And whatever else these forces may be, they are not human intelligence, human contrivance, or human intentions. They have, nevertheless, somehow brought us from a beginning as some humble glob of macromolecular protein to the state where we are beginning to believe ourselves superior to creative nature, ready to cut ourselves off from her entirely, and to direct evolution according to our own notions of what we should and can make ourselves become. But Thoreau, again like Mr. Lindbergh, would now believe more strongly, even than he did in his own rather simple society, that man quite obviously does not know what is good for him. The American Academy of Arts and Sciences (to which I have the honor to belong) publishes a quarterly called *Dædalus*. I have often thought that a more suitable title might be *Icarus*.

It is very important, I think, that the meaning of the word "nature" as Thoreau and Mr. Lindbergh use it should be distinguished from the more common one that refers simply to the animals, the plants, and the landscape that nature has created. And I think "trust in wildness" is a good substitute for the simple "love of nature," when we mean trust in nature as both the creator and sustainer of health, happiness and joy. Outdoor recreation, interest in natural history, the desire to observe beauty spots are all worthy, even necessary, concomitants to this deepest kind of love of nature. But they are not in themselves enough to lead us back along the dangerous road we have been following to a more promising future.

Faith in wildness, or in nature as a creative force, has the deeper, possibly the deepest, significance for our future. It is a philosopy, a faith; it is even, if you like, a religion. It puts our ultimate trust, not in human intelligence, but in whatever it is that created human intelligence and is, in the long run, more likely than we to solve our problems.

This is a modern version of ancient pantheism and therefore not wholly new. But it must not be confused with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century romanticism, which is (sometimes) even its antithesis. We no longer delude ourselves with the romantic notion of an all-wise and all-benevolent Nature upon whose bosom we should, but never have, been willing to rest. "Nature's kindly law" is—like that reaction against it, "Nature, red in tooth and claw"—wholly inadequate to characterize that Wildness that Thoreau celebrated. It is as often cruel as it is kind. No preexisting all-powerful intelligence could conceivably have planned the chaos of conflicting tendencies, problems and solutions that is the history of living things from the beginning to the present moment. It is a history of frequently conflicting experiments, not the working out of any logical, preconceived plan. Hence I at least cannot imagine it as directed by any intelligence superior to the outward manifestations of this evolutionary process.

And yet, in spite of the appearance of chaos and the constant conflict generated by what seem to be cross-purposes, nature has (as even the most mechanical biologist will admit) "tended," even though she never did and could not "intend." Something has been working itself out and to some of us, however difficult it may be to understand, nature has "tended" toward something less simple than the so-called survival of the fittest—which after all means no more than the survival of those who survive.

Reluctant as most biologists are to admit the fact, nature has tended toward progress in two other directions. No creature met the test of mere survival more triumphantly than the sea squirt, but from the beginning of life onward the tendency has been toward a better and better chance for survival of the individual as opposed to that of the species. The higher you go in the scale, the less and less true it is that "So careful of the type she seems,/So careless of the single life." And no less significant is the fact that nature has "tended," if not "intended," to increase the degree of consciousness in newly evolved forms and to make survival depend more and more upon conscious in-

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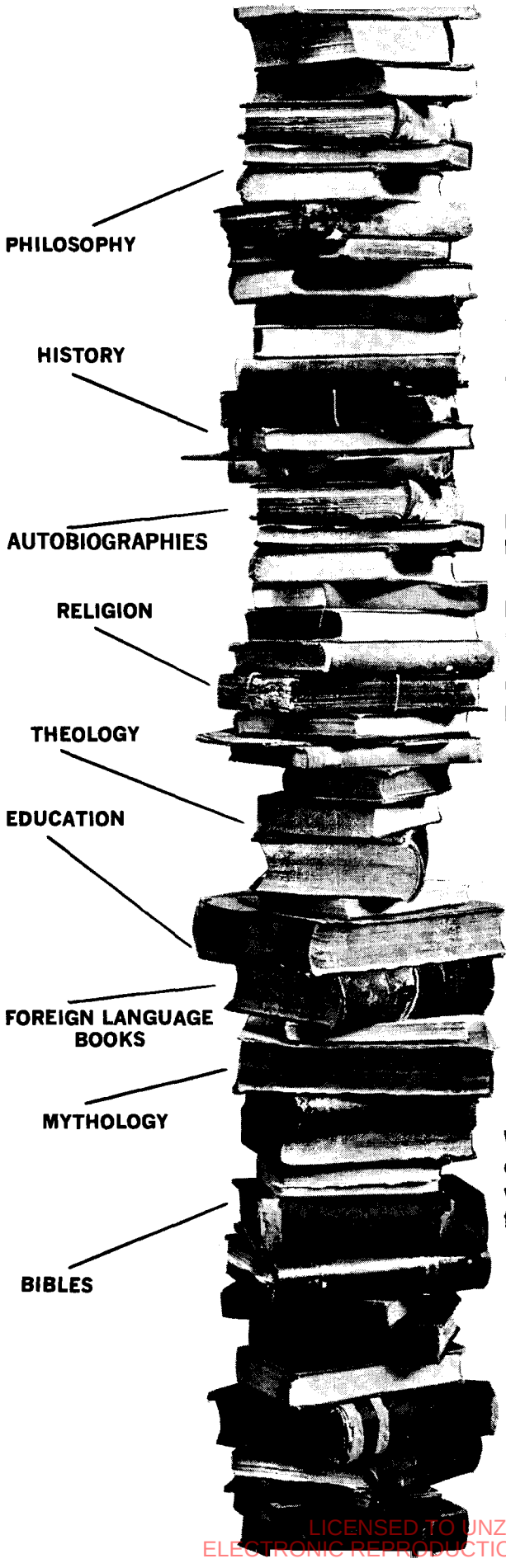

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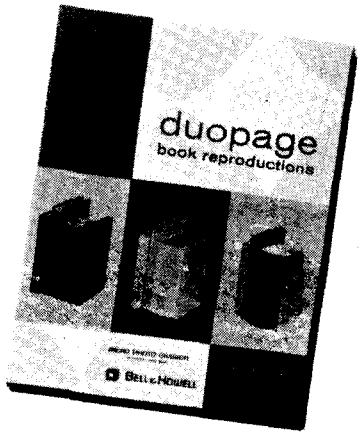

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telligence. How the strict theory of natural selection could account for either of these facts I do not understand, but that is no reason for refusing to acknowledge a tendency as plain as any of those that natural selection does account for. If a God did not create nature, then perhaps nature is creating a God.

Another critical difference between the modern love of nature and that of the romantic poets has to do with the extent to which their celebration of nature tends to be aesthetic rather than philosophical. Even Wordsworth's pantheism is fundamentally different from ours when he describes his God as that being "whose dwelling is the light of setting suns" rather than (as a modern pantheist would be inclined to say) "whose dwelling is in the mysterious proteins and even more mysterious genes." But it is Coleridge who is furthest from what I take to be the most characteristic modern view.

> O Lady! we receive but what we give,
> And in our life alone does Nature live.

This makes the nature the romantic poet celebrated a creation of man, not man's creator. A modern poet, Robert Frost, makes the contrast in a fashion as clear as it is whimsical. The poem is called "Lucretius versus the Lake Poets," and Walter Savage Landor's familiar line, "Nature I loved; and next to Nature, Art," precedes it:

Dean, adult education may seem silly.
What of it, though? I got some of it willy-nilly
The other evening at your college deanery.
And grateful for it (let's not be facetious!)
For I thought Epicurus and Lucretius
By Nature meant the Whole Goddam Machinery.
But you say in college nomenclature
The only meaning possible for Nature
In Landor's quatrain would be Pretty Scenery.
Which makes opposing it to Art absurd
I grant you—if you're sure about the word.
God bless the Dean and make his deanship plenary.*

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Notoriously the dark and early Middle Ages had no interest in animals except insofar as they make allegories. But some of the early church fathers cited the wonders of nature as evidence of the wisdom of God in terms not to be so clearly stated again or so urgently insisted upon until the seventeenth century. Consider, for example, this passage from St. Ambrose's sermon on the fifth day of creation:

> How is it that among countless sheep a lamb, leaping out from the fold, knows the appearance and voice of its mother, hurries towards her and seeks its own source of milk? And how does the mother know her own among the countless lambs? . . . These facts support the evidence that instincts of all animals are untaught . . . that in all things there are traces of the wisdom of the creator, showing in themselves that they were created prepared to assure their own preservation.

Not long ago I had the pleasure of accompanying Mr. Lindbergh on a short survey of Baja California, Mexico, in connection with his work for the World Wildlife Fund to which he now devotes his chief attention. One could not help being aware of the fact that he is still probably the most widely known man in the whole world and that his fame is based, not at all upon his career as a general in the Air Force, but upon his lonely flight across the Atlantic Ocean in 1927.

This pleasant experience of mine was shortly before the first landing on the moon, but I doubt that the names of the astronauts are, even at this moment, as well known over the world as Lindbergh's, and I feel quite positive that while the first landing on the moon will be long remembered, the names and personalities of the first men to make the landing will not.

If I am right in that guess, it raises an interesting question to which I think the answer is rather simple. It is that a man and not a machine was most important when Lindbergh flew the ocean. And without subtracting anything from the credit due the extraordinary skill and daring of the three astronauts, it can hardly be denied that in their case the relative importance of

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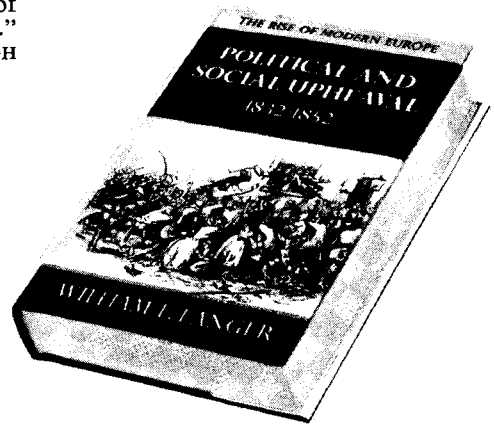

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any single human being or any trio of human beings was far less than that of science and technology. Lindbergh's flight attracted the admiration of the world because it was primarily an exhibition of human skill and of human resource, not something that depended upon advanced technology. He had an airplane, but it was an ordinary airplane of the sort to which people were already accustomed. His triumph was the triumph of a man, not the triumph of computers and a large group of nearly anonymous specialists, plus the vast sums of money that had created hundreds of instruments and machines for this special purpose. Lindbergh's flight made an appeal to the imagination so lasting that nearly fifty years later he never reveals his identity except when necessary and (as I can testify) is greeted by gasps when he is compelled to do so. But only human beings, not machines, can become heroes. Or at least that was true for my generation. Perhaps the generation now growing up has already developed an opposite reaction. Perhaps its members will admire computers and group technology more than human resource and courage. Perhaps its only hero will be those abstractions Science and Technology rather than Man. But I hope not.

This Silence

DANIEL HOFFMAN

In this silence
Hear the breathing
Mouths that suckle

At the breast
Of night—
Is it the wind now

Or the glint of their
Exhalations tousling
Trees across

Whose faces brim
The milky
Rivulets

✪ DANIEL HOFFMAN's fifth book of poems, *Broken Laws,* will be published by Oxford University Press in April. His study of Yeats, Graves and Muir, *Barbarous Knowledge,* has just been reissued in a paperback edition. Mr. Hoffman is professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania.

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K. R. MINOGUE

THERE SEEMS TO BE LITTLE DOUBT that the sixties were a bad time for America. Some of the troubles were perfectly real, but many others were part of a taste for self-laceration that can only be described as a malaise of the times. It would be unfair to regard them merely as a malaise of *Time,* although that celebrated magazine may supply us with the text of our inquiry: "that America and Americans must stand in the larger dock of guilt and conscience for what happened at My Lai seems inescapable" (December 5, 1969).

The fact that this is nonsense can, I think, be conclusively demonstrated. And the best reason for attempting the demonstration is that if the ideas of guilt and innocence become the playthings of moral masochists, they will cease to play a profoundly important role in our moral lives. The moment those ideas are attached to an institution or a system, they are metaphorical, and our grip on moral realities has undergone distortion.

It seems to have been the case that some American soldiers in Vietnam were guilty at specific times of shooting civilians; and it may be true that they did this in response to the commands of officers a little higher up who are *also* guilty of that particular crime. But this chain cannot be extended anywhere near, for example, the President who has decided that the war must be prosecuted or must continue. To go on extending the idea until it engulfs the nation

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and its government has about it the delusory appearance of intellectual profundity, but its real effect is to destroy moral judgment altogether. Let us proceed to the demonstration.

In order to extend the guilt for any massacres in Vietnam to "America or Americans" the soldiers in Vietnam must be seen as having been determined or conditioned by "factors" in American society. But the moment individuals are treated as merely the effects of conditioning, then they cease to be persons, and since guilt can only attach to persons, there is no subject to whom it may be attributed. In other words, if everybody is guilty, then, logically, no one is guilty. This kind of reasoning cannot avoid the logical fork: Either behavior is explained in scientific terms as the effect of causes, in which case it makes no sense to add such terms as "guilt" at all, or else the behavior is treated as the moral decision of the people directly involved, in which case responsibility cannot be extended beyond this circle. (Although, in legal forms of inquiry, once guilt has been determined, these outside "factors" may be considered in mitigation of a severe sentence.)

The argument I am presenting depends upon making a very clear distinction between moral and scientific discourse. In the moral world, we recognize good people and bad, right acts and wrong ones. The good people are generally innocent and the bad ones are guilty, and in each case these words are used because of the choices that have been made. A good person is one who refrains from acting nastily even though he might have justification; he respects the integrity of other people and is capable of dealing with his own tendencies toward aggression and self-aggrandizement. Someone who is bad, by contrast, chooses to hurt or steal or lie when it suits his own purposes or passions. And although we may explain these choices up to a point, we can never regard them as *nothing else but* the outcome of external forces. The moment we do that, we have given up moral judgment in favor of some other kind of intellectual construction.

So much for the moral world. If we are trying to be scientific, on the other hand, we treat whatever is to be explained as the effect of precedent conditions, and we believe that if we can discover both the relevant preconditions, and the laws of their com-

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bination, then we shall have a complete explanation of the act that puzzled us.

Now there are problems about thinking of human behavior in either of these ways. To interpret people morally is to judge behavior in terms of choices, and this involves us in the difficult problem of whether the concept of choice does not rest, when analyzed sufficiently far, upon a mysterious judgment whose only basis is our ignorance of what goes on in the human mind. And when we try to be scientific about human behavior, we are forced to construe choices as being nothing else but stages in the emergence of the conditions of an act. Neither way is, then, entirely satisfactory: What is quite fatal is to confuse them. Nor does it matter, in logic, whether we are dealing with "good" or "bad" science. A great deal of inquiry into "the social system" would be regarded by natural scientists as being too woolly to qualify as science at all. The point is that the *mode* of description is scientific, and the logical point applies.

To import moral terms into scientific description is intellectually fatal because it leads to an infinite regress. If I regard the Americans who may have shot civilians in Vietnam as guilty, then I may try to explain their behavior as the outcome of tendencies in American society. In doing this, I have switched from a moral judgment to a scientific one, transferring the guilt across the ledger from the moral column to the scientific. But having discovered the "guilty elements" of American life, I must now seek to explain these; and if I discover *their* causes, I must go on to find the further causes, and so on. Having moved the guilt from the few American soldiers involved, I shall find no place to terminate my attribution of guilt until I come to—what? The apes? The missing link? The regrettable events in the Garden of Eden? It becomes very easy to see why the doctrine of original sin has been so attractive to generation after generation of men.

To confuse moral with scientific judgments constitutes, then, a clear fallacy, which underlies a great deal of the more tedious breast beating that passes for social criticism throughout the Western world today. It is a fallacy that can be refuted in a number of ways, one of the most interesting being supplied, oddly enough,

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by Karl Marx. But before developing this idea a little further, it is worth trying to cast some light on the question of why this kind of fallacy should be not merely so prevalent today, but also so much a matter of self-congratulation on the part of those who hold it. The reason why it appears to be so attractive is that it gives the appearance of a profundity far in excess of the ordinary commonsense view that a few soldiers gave way to the panic of war or to the insolence of the armed man facing the unarmed. The problem is real enough; but why the weakness for "profundity" in discussing it? Let us sketch out a possibly relevant comic strip that may help.

Western culture has, I take it, been the great success story of all time. By Western culture, I mean everything from Thales and Copernicus to Dostoevski and the electric blanket. And by a great success, I mean something that has attracted people from the periphery. The Roman empire was a great—and fatal—success in just the same way, and bits of Western culture—like the English language—have spread themselves far from their native shores. The consequence of this success has been a long and unruly queue of people seeking to be inducted into so splendid a cultural heritage. Like all cultures, our own is the product of a very small minority of people, and diffusing it is a very difficult task. It is a cultural heritage easily acquired by people of some boldness and an adequate stock of wits. But vast numbers of people in the queue lack both. What they require is merely a certain familiarity with the externals of the culture, which they may use in getting jobs or impressing others further down the queue. To cater for this need, a great number of shortcuts have been evolved. In politics, the ideology, in technology, the manual; in other fields, the handbook: each instrument has supplied a sufficient veneer of culture for the limited practical purposes at hand. The use of these shortcuts has, however, greatly multiplied the range of misjudgment to which any kind of cultural transmission is subject. The man who lacks a grip on an orthodoxy becomes a heretic, just as the man who seeks to be academically respectable without quite understanding the point of what he is doing becomes a pedant. The fate of Western civilization in the twentieth century is to be awash with

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hordes of imitators and pupils, often aggressive, fractious and ill-tempered, looking for shortcuts to a destination they may not want.

One of the common consequences of this situation is familiar from the sort of literature that, generally snobbishly, satirizes the earnest self-improver, the sort of man who conscientiously learns the big words from the *Reader's Digest* each month. In English literature, the model of someone using verbal resources beyond her grasp is Mrs. Malaprop. But in modern social criticism we are dealing with something far more serious—a kind of conceptual malapropism that involves the large-scale misuse of concepts in contexts where they are quite inappropriate. The motive of both kinds of malapropism is the same: the desire to sound impressive. It is here that we find the source of many desperate attempts at profundity. And the most evident sign of this disposition is the weakness for anything that sounds like a technical term. The party conversation that used to make do with homely bits of pretension like the "inferiority complex" is now peppered with terms like "alienation," "paranoid" and "feedback." If such terms do not rise quickly to the tip of the tongue, they can be constructed out of a verbal kit whose more commonly used members are "symbol," "complex," "context," "society," "dynamic," "process," "ongoing" and "structure." In the conversation of those who have learned the trick, these words weave their way in and out of split infinitives, mangled subjunctives and elephantine hypotheticals. Journalistic descriptions with the right sound (such as "generation gap") come to be confidently pronounced as if they explained something. Since language is a vital part of life, its corruption is of more than cultural significance. Indeed ingenious—possibly over-ingenious—exponents of the argument I am making here have attempted to attribute some features of the Vietnam war to the use of pseudo-technicalities like "escalation" and "the credibility gap." The word "gap" clearly has a great future in the profundity kit.

The situation has become so bad that the easiest way to detect a fool these days is simply to count the number of pseudo-technicalities in his conversation. If he cannot have a conversation without referring to it as a "dialogue" he should immediately be suspected of giving more thought to the profundity of his sound than

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to the sense of his utterance. And people who talk too much about "values" ought to be treated with circumspection. There is, of course, nothing intrinsically wrong with any of these words: but where thought is so entirely the creature of verbal fashion, then we may be sure that it is of little significance.

This fashionable weakness for the delusory trappings of profundity seems then to be the explanation for the currency of any kind of social criticism that links moral terms like guilt and innocence on the one hand, with apparently scientific terms like "society" and "system" on the other. A man who says: "I reject as evil the society in which I live," and who would under other circumstances be regarded merely as a vacuous fool, must, under the present fashions, be regarded as someone who has been seduced by easy technicalities. There are three things that are wrong with the myriad utterances of this kind, utterances that may be frequently heard from people who are thereby presenting themselves as thrusting, critical, nonconformist personalities.

The first and central objection is the one we have discussed earlier: this kind of proposition is a confusion between moral and scientific modes of thought. The term "social system" involves conceiving human beings as simply terms in causal sequences, and once this is done, the only question to ask is: Is this true? Acceptance or rejection is simply irrelevant.

The second objection is that while a posture of rejecting the entire social system sounds pretty thoroughgoing compared with the puny plaints of those who merely cry out against prejudice, superficiality and greed, it is in fact merely a failure to specify just what it is in the social system that is objectionable and therefore construed as entirely evil. It clearly cannot be the entire social system in all its details, for that would involve the person uttering the criticism in rejection of himself. On most occasions, this sort of sweeping criticism is uttered by superficial people engaged in cultivating sensations of self-righteousness; they feel, at one level or another, that *they* are to be excluded from the rejection, because they belong to the sensitive ones who have seen the evils of society. It is true, of course, that there are some people who will take the further step, and announce that they themselves are cor-

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rupt as the result of being products of a corrupt society. This is at least more logical, but it cannot quite be sustained; for even those who are prepared to say, with Alexander Herzen, "we are not the doctors, we are the disease," do clearly have some grip on the concept of health, and this must itself be one nonvicious consequence of the society in which they live.

Why, we may ask again, this imprecision? Why this pseudo-scientific attack on the innocent genus, instead of the specific evil? If we remember that one of the main features of modern social criticism is the desire to be "effective," then we may plausibly interpret this curious logical preference as the result of impatience. Good men have always thundered against iniquity, but iniquity has remained unconquered. To be effective (the argument runs) we must destroy "the whole system." On this, many comments might be made, but since it is a romantic disposition, the most succinct comment may come from Baudelaire: *Celui qui n'accepte pas les conditions de la vie vend son âme.*

Terms like "society" are, then, radically ambiguous, since, as used in social criticism, they pretend to a range of extension that is contradicted by the loose way in which they are used.

For the third objection, we may look to the classical statement in Karl Marx. It is the third thesis on Feuerbach, which reads as follows:

> The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men that change circumstances, and that the educator himself needs educating. Hence this doctrine necessarily arrives at dividing society into two parts, of which one is superior to society (in Robert Owen, for example).

The social critic, in other words, is choosing to be part of, and not part of, society, according to his caprice. And in each case, he employs a different logic of explanation, in the one case, determinist, and in the other case, indeterminist, or moral. This latter logic is one that Marx would not have regarded as a mode of explanation at all. It is significant that he was here criticizing a collection of people whom he regarded as preeminently bourgeois, and that the kind of social criticism that I am concerned with is the small

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change of middle-class intellectuals. It is essentially *de haut en bas.* The low—the others, the victims of the system—are seen in scientific terms, while the high who utter the criticism are implicitly exempted from such determination. It will be seen, therefore, that our third objection is merely a restatement of our first, and reduces on examination to the fundamental thesis that it is always an error to confuse moral and scientific modes of explanation.

What conclusion may we draw from this argument? It seems to be philosophically conclusive, but, like all philosophical argument, it serves merely to destroy bogus problems, not real ones. To put the matter another way, a philosophical argument shifts the location of our concerns. Its effect is (if correct) to demonstrate that it is illogical to extend moral terms like "innocence" and "guilt" beyond a world of persons making choices. The logical effect of such extension is to render the terms vacuous, and to license their employment according to the whim of the user. Is it serious if words are capriciously misused in this way? I believe that it is, for words are not merely the stipulative tools of communication, but also represent investments of thought and emotion. It is true, of course, that people do not always do what is logically possible to them; logic does not always determine psychology. Nevertheless, it will certainly happen that some among those people who begin by debasing moral terms, in order to luxuriate in a sense of vicarious guilt, will end up ceasing to regard themselves as responsible for their own actions. When people bite off more than they can chew, they choke.

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The Mythos of the Electronic Revolution

JAMES W. CAREY and JOHN J. QUIRK

IN THORNTON WILDER'S NOVEL *The Eighth Day,* a typical Illinois town provides the setting for a turn-of-the-century celebration that reflects the anticipations of those Americans who identified change and hope with the coming of the year 1900. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Americans who had witnessed the destructive effects of industrialization were subject to a naïve yearning for a rebirth of native optimism and a resuscitation of the bright promises of science and technology. Wilder's title is taken from the theme of a speech by a community leader who voices the concerns and expectations of those times in words of evolutionary religion. Wilder's speaker envisions the new century as an "eighth day," after Genesis, and men of this century as a new breed, free from the past and heir to the future.

In the last third of this century, we are witnessing another prophecy of an "eighth day," punctuated by sophisticated projections of the Year 2000, Mankind 2000, and announcements of the coming of an "Electronic Revolution." In the past, industrial exhibitions and addresses by prominent figures at World's Fairs have been employed to enhance the prestige of technological innovations and to enlist the support of public opinion on behalf of science. Today the Commission on the Year 2000, the World Future Society, and Rand Corporation have become the agencies of prophecy; and the public is invited to participate in such

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elaborate devices as the "World Future Game" of R. Buckminster Fuller. Nevertheless, the language of contemporary futurology contains an orientation of secular religiosity that surfaces whenever the name of technology is invoked.

This futurist mentality has much in common with the outlook of the Industrial Revolution, which was heralded by Enlightenment philosophers and nineteenth-century moralists as the vehicle of general progress, moral as well as material. Contemporary images of the future also echo the promise of an eighth day and thus predict a radical discontinuity from past history and the present human condition. The dawn of this new era is alternatively termed the "post-industrial society," "post-civilization," "the technetronic society" and "the global village." The new breed of man inhabiting the future is characterized as the "post-modern man," "the protean personality" and "the post-literate-electronic man."

Our topic in this extended essay is an increasingly prevalent and popular brand of the futurist ethos that identifies electricity and electrical power, electronics and cybernetics, with a new birth of community, decentralization, ecological balance and social harmony. This set of notions is most readily associated with Marshall McLuhan, but his status as a celebrity merely obscures his position in a school of thought that has been articulated and reiterated over many decades and that has many spokesmen in our time. The notion of an Electronic Revolution is supported by a diverse consensus that includes designer R. Buckminster Fuller, musicologist John Cage, policy scientist Zbigniew Brzezinski, elements of the New Left, and theologians inspired by Teilhard de Chardin. Outside intellectual circles, the "electronic revolution" and the concepts of McLuhan and others have been repeated and embraced by coteries of advertisers and engineers, corporation and foundation executives, and government personnel.

What brings together this anomalous collection under the banner of the Electronic Revolution is that they are in a real sense the children of the "eighth day," of the millennial impulse resurfacing in response to social crises and technical change. They have cast themselves in the role of secular theologians composing theodicies for electricity and its technological progeny.

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Despite the diversity of their backgrounds and positions on other questions, there is within their rhetorical descriptions of the Electronic Revolution a common set of ideas. They all convey an impression that electrical technology is the great benefactor of mankind. Simultaneously, they hail electrical techniques as the motive force of desired social change, the key to the re-creation of a humane community, the means for returning to a cherished naturalistic bliss. Their shared belief is that electricity will overcome historical forces and political obstacles that prevented previous utopias.

Zbigniew Brzezinski pins his view of the future to the belief that: "Ours is no longer the conventional revolutionary era; we are entering a novel metamorphic phase in human history" which is "imposing upon Americans a special obligation to ease the pains of the resulting confrontation" between our society and the rest of the world. In his new version of manifest destiny, Brzezinski suggests that technetronic America will supersede any other social system because all other revolutions have only "scratched the surface . . . alterations in the distribution of power and wealth," while the technetronic revolution will "affect the essence of individual and social existence."

With typically American optimism, Brzezinski enunciates the compatibility of democracy, decentralism and technology. "Yet," Brzezinski continues, "it would be highly misleading to construct a one-sided picture, a new Orwellian piece." "Many of the changes transforming American society augur well for the future." Among those trends Brzezinski identifies "greater devolution of authority" and "massive diffusion of scientific and technical knowledge as a principal focus of American involvement in world affairs" since "technetronics are eliminating the twin insulants of time and space." The resulting situation is one in which a band of social scientists, above party and faction, is enabled to "reduce social conflicts to quantifiable and measurable dimensions, reinforce the trend towards a more pragmatic problem solving approach to social issues."

In McLuhan's scenario it is the Artist rather than the Scientist who is heir to the future. Nonetheless McLuhan dresses electricity

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in a cloak of mystery as the new invisible hand of providence: "The electronic age, if given its own unheeded lee-way, will drift quite naturally into modes of cosmic humanism. . . ." Far more metaphysical than Brzezinski, McLuhan sees in electricity the capacity to "abolish space and time alike" as it confers the mythic dimension on ordinary industrial and social life today." Finally, McLuhan's penchant for religious metaphors leads to a characterization of electricity as Divine Force: "The computer, in short, promises by technology a Pentecostal condition of universal understanding and unity."

Whether the rhetoric of the electronic revolution appears in sacred or secular form, it attributes intrinsically benign and progressive properties to electricity and its applications. It also displays a faith that electricity will exorcise social disorder and environmental disruption, eliminate political conflict and personal alienation, and restore ecological balance and a communion of man with nature.

Such a faith, however, contrasts sharply with developments in electricity and electronics in recent decades. The manifest consequences of electricity are clearly in opposition to a decentralized, organic, harmonious order. The use of electronic technology has been biased toward the recentralization of power in computer centers and energy grids, the Pentagon and NASA, General Electric and Commonwealth Edison. Further, the "electronic society" has been characterized by thermal and atmospheric pollution from the generation of electricity and the erosion of regional cultures by television and radio networks the programming of which focuses upon a single national accent in tone and topical coverage at the expense of local idiom and interest.

And that leads to a dilemma: either modern electricians possess insight into the future that we are barred from possessing or the revolution announced in their rhetoric is mere wishful thinking, or worse, a new legitimation of the status quo. The latter thought is particularly disturbing, for we may be witnessing the projection into the twenty-first century of certain policies of American politics and industry that have in the past had particularly destructive effects. We also may be mystified concerning a possibility

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through the grand eloquence of electrical nomenclature. Electricity is not exactly new, however, and in the history of technology and its social use we may find the terms to appraise the possibilities and potentialities of the electronic revolution.

There is no way to interpret sensibly the claims of electrical utopians except against the background of traditional American attitudes toward technology. For the chastening effect, we should, therefore, remind ourselves of the typical American response to the onset of industrialization and the development of mechanical technology.

America was dreamed by Europeans before it was discovered by Columbus. Atlantis, Utopia, the Passage to India—this land was the redemption of European history before it was the scene of American society. The controlling metaphor that invoked this promised land was Nature, the healing power of an unsullied virgin wilderness. Americans subsequently came to define their "nation's nature" in terms of a pastoral idiom inherited from the European utopians. While mechanical technology was welcomed here, it was to undergo a characterological change when received into the Garden of America. Machinery was to be implanted into and humanized by an idealized rural landscape. The grime, desolation, poverty, injustice and class struggle typical of the European city were not to be reproduced here. America's redemption from European history, her uniqueness, was to be through unblemished nature, which would allow us to have the factory without the factory system, machines without a mechanized society.

A vital and relevant tradition in American studies, inspired by Perry Miller and Henry Nash Smith and continued by Leo Marx and Alan Trachtenburg, has traced the recurrent theme of the "machine in the garden." This was a unique American idea of a new dimension in social existence through which men might return to an Edenic estate through a harmonious blending of nature and manufactures. Each new invention or device was heralded as a means to move toward the goal of a new environment made possible by the geographical and historical options afforded the young nation. This vision was of a middle landscape, an America suspended between art and nature, between the rural landscape

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and the industrial city, where technological power and democratic localism could comprise an ideal way of life. As dreamed by intellectuals, preached by ministers, painted by artists, romanticized by politicians, dramatized by novelists, this society was to be located symbolically and literally midway between the overdeveloped nations of Europe and the primitive communities of the western frontier. America's virgin land and abundant resources would produce an indigenous solution to industrialization on this continent, a solution that would rejuvenate all Europeans who ventured into the New World, and would allow us to leap over the disadvantages of the European system of industrialization. America was, in short, exempt from history: from mechanics and industrialization we would derive wealth, power and productivity; from nature—peace, harmony and self-sufficiency.

Influential Enlightenment philosophers anticipated this rhetoric in forecasting the American future. Condorcet, for example, was convinced that America was freed from the dead hand of the past and "would double the progress of the race" and "make it doubly swift." He believed that America was safely insulated from the Old World turmoil, possessed of sufficient space for preservation of rustic virtues, and could translate material progress into moral improvement and social bliss. It was this attitude that converted Jefferson and his agrarian followers to acceptance of the Hamiltonian program of manufactures and infant industry. Jefferson suspended his skepticism about factory economics and came to differentiate between "the great cities in the old countries . . . [where] want of food and clothing . . . [had] begotten a depravity of morals, a dependence and corruption" and America where "manufactures are as much at their ease, as independent and moral as our agricultural inhabitants, and they will continue so long as there are vacant lands for them to resort to."

A special importance was attached periodically to specific technologies that performed key services. Jefferson himself once remarked that newspapers were more necessary than government itself, and he equated the technology of print and the protection of the rights of a free press with literacy and liberty. Patriotic historians even dated the birth of national consciousness with the

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publication of the first newspaper in Boston in 1704. Finally, the Bill of Rights guaranteed constitutional protection to technology with its clause on freedom of the press.

Later, steam engines occupied a particular place in the pantheon of technologies, for their capacity to link the continent by railroad and waterway and to create new commercial bonds. Eventually there were essays on and oratorical praises of "The Moral Influence of Steam" and "The Indirect Influence of Rail-Roads." A typical passage of the era, this from an address by Charles Fraser to the Mercantile Library Association of Charleston, South Carolina, invests machinery with metaphysical properties: "An agent was at hand to bring everything into harmonious co-operation . . . triumphing over space and time . . . to subdue prejudice and to unite every part of our land in rapid and friendly communication; and that great motive agent was steam."

Lifting the hyperboles of technological sublimity to a philosophical plane, Emerson paired steam and electromagnetism with transcendentalism: "Machinery and transcendentalism agree well . . . Stage-Coach and Railroad are bursting the old legislation like green withes . . . Our civilization and these ideas are reducing the earth to a brain. See how by telegraph and steam the earth is anthropoligized." In Emerson's aphorism, we have a graphic example of the intellectual's awe of technology and the confusion of technological fact with spiritual symbolism.

The rhetoric of the technological sublime, as Leo Marx has felicitously labeled these tributes to the technology of steam and mechanics, constituted the false consciousness of the decades before the Civil War. Neither the printing press nor the steam engine forestalled that fateful conflict, however, or insured that the victory won by Lincoln and Grant would not be lost during Reconstruction. During the Civil War and in the decades thereafter, the American dream of the mechanical sublime was decisively reversed. It became increasingly evident that America was not exempt from history or isolated from the European experience of industrialization. The war itself called into question the dream of a continental democracy. In its aftermath American cities were turned into industrial slums, class and race warfare were everyday

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features of life, economic stability was continually interrupted by depression, the countryside was scarred and ravaged by the railroads, coal and iron mining, and the devastation of forests. But reality was unable to reverse rhetoric and in the last third of the nineteenth century, as the dreams of a mechanical utopia gave way to the realities of industrialization, there arose a new school of thought dedicated to the notion that there was a qualitative difference between mechanics and electronics, between machines and electricity, between mechanization and electrification. In electricity was suddenly seen the power to redeem all the dreams betrayed by the machine.

There were many exemplars of the turn from the mechanical to electrical sublime, but a useful starting figure is the principal American economist of the nineteenth century, Henry Charles Carey. His father, Mathew Carey, an Irish rebel refugee and founding member of the Society for the Promotion of National Industry in Pennsylvania, had published the influential series of writings with which Henry Clay underpinned his "American Plan" for protection of native industries and vast internal improvements in canals and highways. Henry Charles Carey himself rejected Manchester economics and argued for a unique viewpoint in American industrial policy. He suggested that the introduction of the factory and the injection of industry on the native scene would have quite different results in this country than in Europe. Technology on this continent would produce wealth and industrial efficiency but without the wage slavery and environmental disasters of British and European centers.

In 1848, Carey wrote *Past, Present and Future,* a book that formulated a programmatic statement of these ideals in a distinct alternative, "regional associationism." He held that his new system would be realized when regional patterns of "association" between industry and agriculture were founded and merged into a cooperative economy. He thought that his plan would permanently secure decentralized, small-scale units in politics as well as economics. In addition, Carey believed that a union of agriculture, industry and universal education in mechanical skills would prevent divisions between country and city and conflicts between social classes.

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When Henry Charles Carey was born, Washington was president; in the year he died, Henry Ford began work on motorcars in Michigan. During his life, the idea of regional associationism went unrealized as centralization of industry, money and influence, and the exploitation of immigrant labor, were the overwhelming realities of American life. Carey did not, however, give up the "American Plan" but projected it in the language of electricity. In his last book, *The Unity of Law,* Carey substituted the language of electricity for the language of mechanics, identifying the physical laws of electricity and magnetism, then being discovered, with the laws of society, and projecting electricity as the new bond between nature and society. One dense but important quotation will illustrate this shift:

> Electricity presents a far more striking resemblance to the brain power which is its correspondent in the societary life. So striking indeed is it that when we need to express the idea of rapid action of the societary thought and will, we find ourselves compelled to look to the physical world for the terms to be employed, availing ourselves of those of electricity and magnetism . . .
>
> The actual relation of each and every member of a community as giver and receiver, teacher and learner, producer and consumer is positive and negative by turns and relatively to every difference of function and force in his associates, the whole mass constituting a great electric battery to which each individual contributes his pair of plates. Perfect circulation being established as a consequence of perfect development of all individualities, the economic force flows smoothly through every member of the body politic, general happiness and prosperity, improved mental and moral action following in its train. . .
>
> . . . wealth and power . . . everywhere in the ratio in which each and every pair of plates is placed in proper relation with each other; the vitalized circuit being thus established throughout the entire mass and made to bear, with the concentrated energy of the whole upon every object of general interest. . . . The more this power is exercised in the direction of promoting rapid circulation among the plates of which the great battery is composed, the greater is the tendency to the development of an inspiration and an energy closely resembling the service of the lightning of heaven subdued to human use.

In this passage Carey signals the advent of a new rhetoric, another form of the industrial Edenic, which we can term, follow-

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ing Leo Marx, the rhetoric of the electrical sublime. The passage itself indicates how Carey utilized the dialectical categories positive and negative, not as antithetical terms but as signifying a unity among opposites. Thus disharmony and conflict are mere appearances that point to underlying harmonies. Similarly, as a form of popular culture, the rhetoric of the electrical sublime attempted to merge all those contradictory desires of the American imagination. Electricity promised, so it seemed, the same freedom, decentralization, ecological harmony and democratic community that had hitherto been guaranteed but left undelivered by mechanization. But electricity also promised the same power, productivity and economic expansion previously guaranteed and delivered by mechanical industrialization. Other events that occurred during the decade that Carey penned the preceding passages presaged which of these contradictory desires were to determine American social policy. During the 1870s Edison and Bell developed the electronic technology that was to be the basis of the new civilization; Gould, Vanderbilt and others carried on the "telegraph war" and other patent fights for the right to control the new technology; and the basis for industrial giants such as General Electric that were finally to exploit the new technology was perfected. Edison, Bell and other wizards were exploited as symbols of the new civilization, utilized to curry public favor and demonstrate the beneficence of the new technology, while new empires in communications and transportation were created behind the mask of an electrical mystique.

Not everyone was mystified about the real meaning of the new technology. Intellectuals, however, both in Europe and America, could devise nothing more effective than a purely literary strategy for dealing with the situation. Jacob Burkhardt and Anatole France in Europe, Henry Adams and Samuel Clemens in this country, devised the strategy of inverting the technological sublime and portraying the new technology as a specter of disaster. In his novel, *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, Samuel Clemens published what was probably America's first dystopia or anti-utopian science fiction. The American idea comes full circle in the novel as Hank Morgan is projected backward in space and time

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only to be encircled when he realizes that the electric fence erected by his own order for self-protection actually entraps him. This is an important event in American letters precisely because it contrasts so sharply with the Whitmanesque optimism of his earlier Mark Twain work. Similarly, Henry Adams was obsessed with the laws of thermodynamics and the specter of entropic disaster. *The Education of Henry Adams* is filled with pages of disillusionment of the sort that led Adams to locate the exact shift from the "old universe" of Boston genteel culture to the new phase of history determined by sheer power in the events of the year 1844: "the opening of the Boston and Albany Railroad; the appearance of the first Cunard steamers in the bay; and the telegraphic message which carried from Baltimore to Washington the news that Henry Clay and James K. Polk were nominated for the Presidency."

Despite the morbid views of literary intellectuals, the rhetoric of the electrical sublime was appropriated by reformers and regenerated by visionary utopians. The reformers and idealists blamed the corporation for defeating the possibilities of the electrical revolution. Edward Bellamy's speculations in *Looking Backward* and *Equality* and William Dean Howells' fictional *A Traveller from Altruria* were reversions to sublime aspiration and returns to optimistic attitudes toward electricity. Bellamy, a socialist propagandist, and Howells, a genteel reformer and member of the Boston Bellamy Club, envisioned the social use of radio and television and rapid transport. For them electric power for communication and transportation were to facilitate the diffusion of culture, dispersion of population and decentralization of control: in Howells' phrase, "getting the good of the city and the country out of the one and into the other."

Historically, the precedent for coupling pastoralism with technological power was the very first prophecy of an electrical revolution. In 1770, a minor philosopher and dramatist, Louis Sébastien Mercier, wrote a novel of the future, *L'An 2440,* in which electricity was portrayed as both a material and a moral instrument. In Mercier's electrical utopia, there were imagined inexhaustible lamps and lights, motion pictures for cultivation, and education of the populace in public virtues, and the higher enjoyment of

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sensory stimulation. A hundred years later the idea of an electrical utopia had great appeal to Europeans as well as to Americans.

In his valuable studies, Lewis Mumford credits the Russian anarchist and geographer, Prince Pëtr Kropotkin, with the first forward-looking interpretation to the effect that electrical technics could rescue civilization from the banes and burdens of industrialism and restore communal conditions. In his *Fields, Factories and Workshops,* Kropotkin recommended that electric power could serve to create "industrial villages" where handicrafts, manufactures, agriculture and scientific investigation could be combined in small-scale regional economies. In Kropotkin's scheme, "domestic industry" was to be alternated with the "moral and physical advantages" of agrarian toil, and an egalitarian situation of mutual cooperation was to promote solidarity in the common endeavors of experimentation and production.

At the same time, the German scientist Werner von Siemens wrote to his colleagues that alliance of inventors and statesmen should be promoted:

> Now is the time to build electric power stations throughout the world . . . Thereby the small workshop and the individual working by himself in his own home will be in a position . . . to compete with the factories that generate their power cheaply by steam-engines and gas-engines . . . [and] will in the course of time produce a complete revolution in our conditions, favour small scale industry, add to the amenities and ease of life—by ventilators, lifts, street tramways, etc.

In England Ebenezer Howard, author of *Garden Cities of Tomorrow: The Peaceful Path to Real Reform,* produced an Anglicized version of Bellamyism in which he assured his readers that "The smoke fiend is well within bounds in Garden City" where "all machinery is driven by electric energy." These strains of thought converged in an important group, the International Association for the Advancement of Science, Art, and Education, an intellectual league of the early twentieth century. Among its membership were counted the British social thinker, Graham Wallas, who is today only remembered for coining the phrase "The Great Society," and the forgotten man of the study of ecology, the Scot biologist and town planner Patrick Geddes.

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On the eve of World War I, Graham Wallas, disenchanted with Fabianism and its bureaucratic formulae, wrote *The Great Society*. In a series of passages Wallas anticipated the disillusionment with technological society, the failure of the welfare state on qualitative issues, and "the quest for a new environment whose stimulation of our existing disposition shall tend toward the good life." Ironically, Wallas' consciousness of the problems posed by advanced technology was not to be generally recognized until the era when Lyndon Johnson inadvertently accepted Wallas' phrase as an Administration trademark. Wallas observed that:

> Those who first developed these inventions [steam and electricity] expected that their results would be entirely good . . .
>
> . . . And, now, we find ourselves doubting, not only as to the future Happiness of individuals in the Great Society but as to the permanence of the Great Society itself.
>
> . . . When one looks, for instance, at the beautiful drawings which have lately been prepared by a body of citizens for a new Chicago, one feels that they are suited to giants and not to men . . .

As a therapeutic strategy, Wallas advocated a revival of dialogue and discussion to counterbalance the overwhelming forces of impersonal organization and mass communication. In values and vocabulary, Wallas emphasized the placement of technology within open spaces and evoked the idyllic image of a decentralized rural environment:

> If I try for myself a visual picture of the social system which I should desire for England and America there comes before me a recollection of those Norwegian towns and villages where everyone . . . seemed to respect themselves, to be capable of happiness as well as pleasure and excitement . . . in the employment of all their faculties. I can imagine such people learning to exploit the electric power from their waterfalls, and the minerals in their mountains, without dividing themselves into dehumanized employers or officials and equally dehumanized hands.

A now neglected thinker, Patrick Geddes was the first systematic writer to see beyond science fiction, social criticism and romantic agrarianism in order to construct a visionary utopia consonant with urban conditions. In the first quarter of the twentieth

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century, Geddes' seminal influence and personal persuasiveness gained followers among regional planners, civic groups and social movements. The goal set by Geddes and his adherents was nothing less than a "realizable Eutopia" here and now. Geddes was the first to offer a full-scale utopia systematically within a theory of electrical technology that attempted to develop the *qualitative* difference between mechanical and electrical technology. He predicted a "great transition from a machine and money economy towards one of life, personality and citizenship." He saw the modern phase as "something between" the "old paleotechnic" mechanisms and "neotechnic" innovations. Here, Geddes noted, "there are two very distinct Industrial Ages, characterized by steam and electricity respectively."

Geddes' own background played a central role in his utopianism. A patriotic Scot, a republican, and a regionalist who for years refused an offer of knighthood, Patrick Geddes identified with the Celtic revival in culture and supported local rule for Gaelic Ireland and Scotland. He also identified with Zangwill's experiment in Palestine and with Gandhi's attempt to revive domestic industry in India. Geddes viewed the centralization of financial and industrial power in capitals such as London and Berlin and a few satellites as antithetical to cultural traditions and the integrity of the intellect. He frequently denounced "colonization, conquest and empire" because of its exploitation, militarism, and destruction of viable economies and cultures in subjected nations. And he rejected the Fabian strategy of the Social Democratic Federation and the extremism of the Left because of the temporizing with authoritarianism and bureaucracy and the condescension toward local institutions.

As a young student, Geddes had eschewed Ruskin and Morris for their "tidings of the establishment, for the hundredth time, of a new utopia." But the evidence of cultural decay combined with the dissipation of human and natural resources, impressed Geddes with a sense of urgency and the imperative need for a solution. During a tour of Britain, Kropotkin delivered lectures and distributed pamphlets on the potential for an age of plenitude. Geddes and others were touched by Kropotkin's alternative be-

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cause, as Geddes said, it "burst upon us in the midst of a great industrial crisis."

In a series of works, Geddes and his colleague Victor Branford treated burning questions covered in the titles *Cities in Evolution, The Coming Polity* and *The Making of the Future.* Geddes' gospel obtained great currency, especially in America. During lecture tours and a stay at the New School for Social Research, Geddes gathered attention and disciples. In turn, America made a deep impression upon Geddes. He later wrote:

> Here America is of leading interest, with its labor saving inventions, its electricians, its efficiency engineers . . . This incipient social order is emerging as Neotechnic . . . more efficient, less wasteful of nature. Pinchot, with his renewing forests, is thus like Plunkett in Ireland with his renewing farms . . . We are thus passing beyond mere Neotechnics, in which the opposition of labor and capital goes on in the city, without thought of the country, and, opening fully into a Geotechnic phase . . . beyond the dream of historic Utopias . . . the creation, city by city, region by region, of the Eutopia; each a place of health and well being, even of glorious, and, in its way, unprecedented beauty.

Internationally, Geddes was awarded the informal title of "the apostle of the sanitary picturesque" and "the big brother of reform." In the United States he conferred with such associates as John Dewey, Jane Addams and Thorstein Veblen. Lewis Mumford became Geddes' major disciple and Geddes' programs were embodied in the newly formed Regional Planning Association of America whose charter members included Gifford Pinchot, Henry Wright and Stuart Chase. In these circles, Geddes sparked a movement around the goals of public electric power and community planning. The Regional Planning Association launched a "giant power" crusade to integrate the new technology with conservationism and democratic localism. In the words of the then Governor of Pennsylvania, Gifford Pinchot, the keynote for the power crusade was sounded:

> Steam brought about the centralization of industry, a decline in country life, the decay of many small communities, and the weakening of family ties. Giant Power may bring about the decentralization of industry, the restoration of country life, and the upbuilding of small

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communities and the family . . . If we control it, instead of permitting it to control us, the coming electrical development will form the basis of civilization happier, freer, and fuller of opportunity than the world has ever known. . . .

But the real beneficiaries of the rhetoric of the electrical sublime were the electric light and power companies who presided over the new technologies. The public relations techniques pioneered by Samuel Insull and other executives were so effective in their invocation of the new civilization they were building under the aegis of "giant power" that even the *New Republic* was reluctant to criticize them until the Depression and the resultant scandals caused their fall from favor.

During the Depression American electricians contended that the promises of electricity had been subverted by "vested interests," but that hydroelectric power and a new type of political organization would redeem the original message of Geddes. During the 1930s, the "giant power" crusade was renewed but now under the auspices of government rather than industry. A spokesman for the League for Industrial Democracy, Stuart Chase, put forward "A Vision in Kilowatts" in *Fortune* magazine in 1933:

> It [electric power] not only marches to ever greater quantitative output but it also transforms the entire economic structure as it goes. In its full development, electricity can yoke a whole continental economy into something like one unified machine, one organic whole. The parts may be small, flexible, located where you please, but with their central station connections. Electricity can give us universally high standards of living, new and amusing kinds of jobs, leisure, freedom and an end to drudgery, congestion, noise, smoke, and filth. It can overcome the objections and problems of a steam civilization. It can bring back many of the mourned virtues of the handicraft age without the human toil and curse of impending scarcity that marked the age.

The New Deal seized upon the motif of a "New Power Age" for its creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Rural Electrification Administration. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his advisers invested T.V.A. and R.E.A. with the role of models for a new America, an inspirational symbol around which to rally people to renew their confidence in America and its ca-

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pacity for rehabilitation. Addressing the World Power Conference in 1936, F. D. R. proclaimed the New Deal ideal of a pragmatist's utopia:

> Now we have electric energy which can be and often is produced in places away from where fabrication of usable goods is carried on. But by habit we continue to carry this flexible energy in great blocks into the same great factories, and continue to carry on production there. Sheer inertia has caused us to neglect formulating a public policy that would promote opportunity for people to take advantage of the flexibility of electric energy; that would send it out wherever and whenever wanted at the lowest possible cost. We are continuing the forms of over-centralization of industry caused by the characteristics of the steam engine, long after we have had technically available a form of energy which should promote decentralization of industry.

Roosevelt concluded that our command over electrical energy could lead to an industrial and social revolution, that "it may already be under way without our perceiving it."

The Tennessee Valley Authority was intended to serve as a showcase for the positive linkage of electricity, decentralization, and citizen participation in reclamation of the landscape. T.V.A. was not intended merely to generate energy and produce fertilizer. In the words of the President, it was also to grant the Middle South an exemplary way of life: "a social experiment that is the first of its kind in the world, a corporation clothed with the power of government, but possessed of the flexibility and initiative of private enterprise," "a return to the spirit and vision of the pioneer," which "touches and gives life to all forms of human concern." "If we are successful here," Roosevelt concluded, "we can march on, step by step, in a like development of other great natural, territorial units . . . and distribution and diversification of industry."

David Lilienthal's dedicatory address to T.V.A. summarizes and recapitulates the rhetoric of the electrical sublime:

> This valley will be the first to enjoy to the full the fruits of this new age, the Age of Electricity. Those who have its blessings in abundance will come into a new kind of civilization. New standards of living, new and interesting kinds of jobs, totally new industrial processes, an end

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to drudgery, congestion, waste . . . such things are in store for us. For in this valley in another decade, electricity will hardly be reckoned in cost, so cheaply can your communities then supply it.

The T.V.A. idea acquired numerous foreign admirers. Probably the most ardent was Madame Keun, a French visitor, whose *A Foreigner Looks at TVA* grasped the salient motifs of the American imagination that underlined the New Deal approach. In her book, the T.V.A. appeared as a "happy balance between the Jeffersonian dream of the self-sufficient agricultural community and the mechanical advantages of the power age." The T.V.A. experience, she thought, showed that "in a capitalistic democracy . . . that imperishable quest of man for the millenium can be pursued by evolutionary adaptation."

At home and abroad the T.V.A. ideal was considered the original model from which other regions and countries might adapt a prime vehicle of social democracy. In 1944 Henry A. Wallace argued for many T.V.A.'s around the world under the rhetorical rubric of "Universal Electrification." Wallace suggested that a postwar expansion of the T.V.A. would constitute a powerful force for peace, link economic interests on a noncontroversial basis and obviate international tensions from the Danube to the Ganges. For, as Wallace put it, "valleys are much the same everywhere." After World War II Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., saw the T.V.A. as a weapon in the Cold War that, if properly employed, "might outbid all the social ruthlessness of the Communists for the support of the people of Asia."

We shall not here review the fate of T.V.A.; it is an ambiguous legacy at best. Certainly it has not proved to be a vast and catalytic social experiment. Rather than being a progressive force in the economy, it has identified itself with the electrical goods industries that have clustered around it, and the Authority has even been accused of corrosive strip-mining practices and of rate fixing during the Dixon-Yates controversy. Rather than being a harbinger of economic and political democracy for the valley, it has bureaucratized its interests and rhetoric and identified itself with the status quo. Rather than leading to a new social age, it

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has merely used electricity to elevate the traditionally narrow and socially wasteful standards of efficiency. Indeed, the entire American romance with dam building, fertilizer and electrical power—both in domestic and foreign policy—increasingly looks like a profound misadventure. Exported as programs of development to other nations, it has involved the United States in political misadventures that equate American democracy with American technology and has resulted in proposals such as the Mekong Delta Authority and the McNamara project to electrify the DMZ. Applied to climatic zones different from those of the United States and Europe, the dam building mania has produced economic and ecological disasters.

The T.V.A. experience demonstrates the folly of identifying technical projects with the creation of democratic community. As contemporary rhetoric is doing with electronics, T.V.A. rhetoric coupled ideas about electrical sublimity with attitudes concerning contact with nature and saw in the merger the automatic production of democracy. As a result, T.V.A. mesmerized liberals and prevented a serious evaluation of its failures; only Rexford Tugwell seems to have maintained the degree of detachment necessary to understand that "T.V.A. became more of an example of democracy in retreat than of democracy on the march."

It was Lewis Mumford who placed the T.V.A. and similar ventures into greater perspective. In *Technics and Civilization* and other works during the 1920s and early 1930s, he had blamed "the metropolitan milieu" and "the cult of paper money" for the postponement of the new order prophesied by Patrick Geddes, Kropotkin, and the "garden cities" planners. By mid-century, a disillusioned Lewis Mumford found new culprits in the pragmatic liberals of the type who established T.V.A.:

> The liberal's lack of a sense of history carries a special liability: it makes him identify all his values with the present . . .
>
> Like their counterparts, in the Soviet Union and China, our own leaders are now living in a one-dimensional world of the immediate present unable to remember the lessons of the past or to anticipate the probabilities of the future . . . Similarly, the TVA is as characteristic of our American economy as DuPont or General Motors.

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But Mumford did not have a strategy for dealing with the reversal of his original hopes. His articulation of the rhetoric of the electrical sublime had, if anything, contributed to the situation he found so abhorrent. It remained for the now obscure Canadian academic, Harold Innis, to produce the first systematic criticism of the new technological behemoth.

It is one of the more remarkable ironies of this entire narrative that Marshall McLuhan should have come under the influence of his colleague at the University of Toronto, Harold Innis. For Innis uncovered the most vulnerable point in the rhetoric of the electrical sublime and disputed all those claims for electricity McLuhan today celebrates. Innis principally disputed the notion that electricity would replace centralization in economics and politics with decentralization, democracy and a cultural revival. Innis placed the "tragedy of modern culture" in America and Europe upon the intrinsic tendencies of both printing press and electronic media to reduce space and time to the service of a calculus of commercialism and expansionism.

Innis' insightful analysis was founded upon a long tradition of scholarship and thorough research. At the University of Chicago Innis was influenced by the research of the father of modern urban sociology, Robert Park, and also by the work of Thorstein Veblen. In his own studies of the Canadian staple trade and the broad relationships between Europe and North America, Innis developed the perspective upon which he based his historical and social criticism. He refuted the frontier hypothesis of Turner, "so gratifyingly isolationist, . . . that the source of inspiration and action was not at the center but the periphery of western culture."

Innis assessed the importance of historical and geographical factors and their relation to the means of communication and transportation. He developed from those assessments the theory that the ways in which communication and transportation systems structure (or "bias") relations of time and space were at the base of social institutions. Innis divided communication and social control into two major types. Space-binding media, such as print and electricity, were connected with expansion and control over territory and favored the establishment of commercialism, empire and

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eventually technocracy. On the other hand, time-binding media, such as manuscript and human speech, favored relatively close communities, metaphysical speculation, and traditional authority.

Innis argued that the "bias" of modern technology was to undermine both space and time, history and geography:

> Industrialism implies technology and the cutting of time into fragments suited to the needs of the engineer and the accountant. The tragedy of modern culture has arisen as inventions . . . have destroyed a sense of time. . . .
>
> Obsession with present-mindedness precludes speculation in terms of duration and time . . . The general restiveness inherent in an obsession with time has led to various attempts to restore concepts of community.

In addressing the works of Geddes, Innis assayed the long-term effects of electrical power. In an essay on "The Penetrative Powers of the Price System," Innis argued that whatever temporary manifestations of decentralization and democratization might seem associated with electrical power, these were merely superimpositions upon a larger trend toward increased territorial expansion, spatial control, commercialism and imperialism.

This capacity of the new electrical technology, Innis pointed out, enhanced the capacity of imperial powers to bring satellite areas within the orbit of their control. No amount of rhetoric could varnish or reverse the pattern of technological control, Innis held; only the workmanship of politics and scholarship, the consistent attempt to maintain another counter-culture, offered any viability.

Innis felt that the demise of culture in the modern world could only be prevented by a deliberate curtailment of the influence of technics and those institutions in which technics were encased and by a strenuous cultivation of the realms of art, ethics and politics. Like Patrick Geddes and Graham Wallas, he identified the oral tradition, with its emphasis on dialogue and dialectic, values and philosophical speculation, as the countervailing culture to the technological culture of sensation and mobility.

But the support of such an oral tradition, and its embodiment in cultural enclaves, requires that elements of stability be preserved and extended, that communities of association and styles

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of life be freed from the blinding obsolescence of technical change. The demands of growth, empire and technology itself, Innis noted, however, placed primary focus upon the global development of electric power and electronic media as they fostered expansion and administration at a distance.

The increasing facility with which electronic media penetrated national boundaries worried Innis since it increased the capacities of imperialism and cultural invasion. Innis considered "monopolies," whether of electrical technology or, for that matter, rigid orthodoxy, as threats to human freedom and cultural survival. He perceived beneath the surface of the Cold War and the mission-oriented scholarship of "post-war adventurers in the universities" and "pseudo-priests of science" exactly such a threatening momentum.

Despite what Marshall McLuhan says concerning the effect of television on the senses, the impact of such communications media stems from a simple technological fact: each of the modern media has increased the capacity for controlling space. They do this by reducing signaling time (the gap between the time a message is sent and the time it is received) between persons and places. Print solved the problem of producing standardized communications rapidly and in sufficient units to administer large areas. While allowing for production efficiency, print does not possess an efficient distribution system and is dependent upon ship, rail and air transportation to gain rapid and widespread circulation. The development of electronic communication beginning with telegraph and perfected by radio and television solved simultaneously the problems of rapid production and distribution.

Modern media of communications have, however, a common effect: they widen the range of reception while narrowing the range of distribution. Large audiences receive but are unable to make direct response or participate otherwise in vigorous discussion. Consequently, modern media create the potential for the simultaneous administration and control of extraordinary spaces and populations. No amount of rhetoric will exorcise this effect. The bias of technology can only be controlled by politics, by curtailing the expansionist tendencies of technological societies and

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by creating avenues of democratic discussion and participation beyond the control of modern technology.

In his last years Innis was pessimistic about the prospects. The development of radio and television, the enormous influence of American communication interests on the allocation of international frequency patterns and the expansion of communication industries abroad were leading to a more exquisite form of cultural imperialism. In *Changing Concepts of Time,* Innis commented that "vast monopolies of communication occupying entrenched positions involved a continuous, systematic, ruthless destruction of elements of permanence essential to cultural activity."

What Innis saw most clearly was that the main meaning of electronics was not in the provision of entertainment and information through radio and television. He recognized that the speed and distance of electronic communication enlarged the possible scale of social organization and greatly enhanced the possibilities of centralization and imperialism in matters of culture and politics. Perhaps the final meaning of electronics is in the use of telephony and computers to enlarge enormously the spatial bias of modern man: in short, to take us to the moon and make possible the colonization and political control now of "outer space" by the most electronically advanced cultures—those of the United States and the Soviet Union.

His pessimism concerning the future of Western man was deepened by the knowledge that the one group that understood the course of history and the dangers of modern technology—namely, scholars and scientists—had themselves internalized the technical psychosis and had become "hot gospellers of truth" producing in the name of science "new monopolies to exploit faith and credibility."

But the analysis and advice of Harold Innis have been unavailing. The myth of the electrical powerhouse has been perfected in our own time and wedded once more to the utopian tradition by Innis' former colleague, Marshall McLuhan.

(This is the first part of a two-part article.)

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For J. C. R., In His Eightieth Year

GARY MIRANDA

Let the dead bury the dead
Seems a likely price to pay
April down your days instead

Bones that yours have comforted
Lightlier lean to black decay
Let the dead bury the dead

Go is green and stop is red
April is green and means to stay
April down your days instead

Thomas the Stern and Tender Ted
Finished their work and went their way
Let the dead bury the dead

Hardy's in the garden bed
Getting colder day by day
April down your days instead

All I have to say is said
Nothing now remains to say
Let the dead bury the dead
April down your days instead

✪ GARY MIRANDA is currently on leave from graduate work at the University of California, Irvine, as a visiting instructor of creative writing aboard Chapman College's World Campus Afloat. His poems have appeared in *Northwest Review, Transatlantic Review, Malahat Review, Motive, Mademoiselle* and other magazines.

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If Not Reason, What?

KINGMAN BREWSTER, JR.

TO BE ALLOWED TO ADDRESS THIS PRESTIGIOUS GATHERING of academic achievers is indeed an honor.

If I cannot join you in the recall of outstanding personal humanistic or scientific accomplishment, I can at least join you in a nostalgia for the better days gone by. With the humanists I can yearn for the days when the world of history, the arts and letters was unabashed in its admiration for aristocratic taste. Grace, style and even manners were honored. With the scientists I can remember the happy hope of not so long ago that those who created the power to destroy could create the power to prosper. As a fund raiser I can long for the days when an eager society financed a veritable scientific binge in the name of national security, health, education and welfare.

Perhaps my own personal nostalgia is especially poignant, since I was a child of the hope that reason could shackle political and economic power in the name of law. The Harvard citation to its law graduates bade us "to help in the shaping and application of those wise restraints that make men free." Now we feel that our values are unappreciated at best, scorned at worst—both by the elder philistines on the right and the juvenile barbarians on the left.

As an officer in the "effete corps" perhaps I should fight back against our latter-day Goliath. That is scarcely necessary, however, since we meet in Boston, the home of the "impudent snob." Some feel more hope than threat in the suggestion that we have been "written off" by the Nixon Administration.

The more interesting challenge to those of us who "would characterize themselves as intellectuals" comes from within the effete corps itself; not from the silent majority without, but from

✪ KINGMAN BREWSTER, JR., president of Yale University, presented this annual Phi Beta Kappa-Sigma Xi address before the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Boston on December 29, 1969.

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the raucous minority within the house of intellect. I refer to the pupils (a much safer word than students—whoever heard of "pupil power"?).

Since mine is not a calling conducive to long periods of tranquil reflection, let alone research, I thought I might dwell on the confrontations that are my preoccupation. They occur on many different planes—physical, political, intellectual. As is too often the case in the televised society, the superficial symptoms are those most easily dramatized. So a bloody head shocks the eye, while the challenge of the anti-intellectual brain passes without report.

There is, obviously, a frontal challenge posed by resort to physical disruption and intimidation from the New Left. It is more deeply rooted in personal experience but no more acceptable when it comes from militant blacks. It is most disgusting when it is the bully's backlash, whether in the form of police overkill or the political overkill of recriminatory legislation or investigation that seeks to impose a pall of conformity on the campus.

The academy could not long survive if violence or counter violence, coercive disruption or coercive conformity, were allowed to prevail. Fortunately, no more than a tiny minority seek to tear down the university forcibly. Thus far, anyway, it would not appear that there is a silent majority that would seek to suppress dissent or gain conformity by coercion. I confess I am more afraid of the latter than I am of the former. I know the Congress of the United States would disagree with me. Perhaps that itself proves my point. I would note that the President of the United States and his Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, and his Commissioner of Education deserve much of the credit for thus far stemming the tide of recriminatory legislation.

I would not belittle the dangers of forcible intrusion on the freedom of the academy, from without as well as from within. But I do not think it is our most fundamental or our most enduring challenge.

A second preoccupation of academic administrators and faculty leadership and trustees these days is suggested by the much mouthed and altogether stilted word "governance." This is important even in its legal details. It does involve more than tidying up.

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There is a job of work to be done if the inherent conservatism of taxpayer and alumni support from outside, and the inherent faculty conservatism on academic matters on the inside, are not to harden the academic arteries just at a time when a capacity for change is most urgent. So the stakes in the reappraisal of our governing structures are not meager.

The important argument is not essentially about the legal superstructure of university government. The broader issue can be framed as "Anarchy or Hierarchy?" The use of such terms may seem extreme as applied to academia, but I don't think so. Many, many well-motivated students bitterly resent the fact that rewards and penalties, privileges and opportunities are parceled out at a university. In a true "community," they say, there should be no distinction in rank, status or authority among the various members. Students and faculty should have an undifferentiated initiative, voice and power in the design of curricula and courses, in the hiring of teachers and the admission of students, and in the allocation of the university's resources.

With a beguiling confidence in our capacities, when they are asked how they would ever get any decisions made in such a "community," they reply, "Oh, you are hired to work that out."

But the problem is not one of political technique. It stems from the fact that the university is to some extent an inherently hierarchical, even aristocratic, institution. Its existence presupposes that some people have something special to contribute to the thinking of others. That quality is usually related to superior experience, whether the direct experience of life or the vicarious experience of learning. The market would seem to confirm this, given the oversupply of talented students and the very scarce supply of talented faculty. (In between are the graduate students and postdoctoral students, some competing for entry, some recruited.)

The university by its nature cannot avoid making judgments. It must decide, or someone must decide in its name, who shall be allowed to enter. It must decide who deserves the opportunity of initial junior appointment, who deserves the lifetime security of senior appointment.

It must decide who is most deserving of the honors, certifica-

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tion, the credentials of accomplishment. In largest part this is because society expects a warranty, not only of performance but also of intellectual responsibility. (It is interesting to note in passing that, when the Harvard Law School offered the first-year students the option of moving from a nine-category grading system to a pass-fail scheme, only about a third of them took up the option.)

Within all the controversy about grading lies a more significant clue to what the society expects of a university when it invests either the taxpayers' or the donors' capital in the work of the senior scholar or in the education of the young. These resources are made available not for therapy or self-indulgence, but to develop the intellectual capacities of those who seem most promising. No pejorative catcalls of "elitism" can avoid the fact that the higher one goes on the educational ladder, the more expensive become the human and capital resources required. There is a demonstrable public interest in their wise rationing. Increasing selectivity is inherent in the highest levels of higher education.

Of course none of these judgments can be made with pristine objectivity. But history and ingenuity have evolved a structure, a procedure, and standards that do as best as may be to assure that the inevitable assessments and consequent rewards and burdens are handled with as little prejudice, as little cronyism as possible. "Academic due process," it might be called. Like due process of law, it seems to reflect concern for the competence of the judge, for his independence, and most especially for his objectivity.

Even if few of the young seek to deny the inevitability of selectivity and hierarchy in university affairs and structure, many of them are wholly skeptical of pretensions to objectivity. In Professor Theodore Roszak's phrase they see Objective Consciousness as a Myth. Although their "Counter Culture," as he calls it, reeks with romanticism, in their cynical skepticism of academic neutrality they are in the tradition of those legal "realists" of the thirties who pooh-poohed the objective compulsions of reason as a determinant of judicial decisions.

Obviously none of the judgments involved in academic selectivity and rewards and appointments can be made with total objectivity, but academic due process, like civil and criminal due proc-

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ess, is an ideal essential to university aspiration. At least it sets a standard for self-consciousness and holds up a measure for the critic.

Cynical disparagement of objectivity as a "myth" seems to me both naïve and irresponsible. Any claim of novelty to the observation that men are fallible at best, corruptible at worst, is naïve. Its irresponsibility lies in the conclusion that, since the ideal is unattainable, it should not be held up as a standard to both practitioners and critics.

Precisely because the unknown truth defies conclusive verification; precisely because intellectual promise is not easily assayed; precisely because reasonable men will differ about the quality of another's work, it is all the more important that differences be articulated in terms of reason. The difficulty of judgment should not be used as an excuse for bias. Due process in academic affairs, as in legal affairs, is even more important for hard cases than for easy ones.

The apparatus and practices designed to assure as much objectivity as possible will vary from institution to institution. The common denominator that cannot vary, however, is a good faith attempt, at least, to assess the merits of the work or of the man—be he student or colleague—by a reasoned elaboration of a common understanding of these qualities related to the academic mission. Primary among these, surely, are the honesty and rigor of a man's thought and craftsmanship; and his ability to contribute to the understanding of those who listen to him, or argue with him, or read or view or listen to his works.

I say "reasoned elaboration" because there is no room for the notion that some unarticulated hunch, some subjective, unreasoned assertion should be allowed to substitute for evidence made pertinent by reasoned elaboration of the university's purpose. Abuse of academic power, like abuse of judicial power, can be held in check not so much by the independence of the judge as by the requirement that reasons must be given for the opinion. These reasons, in turn, must wash in terms of general principles and propositions embraced by the institution. The judge is disciplined by the realization that the reasons he gives in any one case would have to be applied to similar cases involving other people.

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Universities would not survive any alteration in the name of governance that did not acknowledge that, for the university to do its job, some people must sit in judgment on the work of others. Moreover, no university could long maintain its quality, self-respect or the respect of others if it were to abandon a strenuous effort to make its judgments as objectively and as rationally as possible. A community of shamans and gurus would not be a university.

There is, however, an even more fundamental threat to the survival of the university than the political confrontations over issues of "governance."

Romantic shamanism may be a passing fad or fancy. Historical parallels with the early nineteenth century are drawn by both men of learning and by publicists. If journalistic obituary salutes to the sixties were to be believed, one might suppose that it would not be long before we could go back to our pursuit of truth in the light of reason, confident of the understanding and support of the young.

That is not the way I read the tea leaves. While destructiveness is limited to a very small number, and while romantic visions of the university as a misty community without form or authority are confined to a limited minority, impatience is pervasive. Right, left, bright, dull, active, apathetic—the shadow of impatience touches them all. The confrontation that matters most in my view is the confrontation between impatience and the university.

Now in a sense this is nothing new. Most would-be Socrates are a crashing bore. Nothing is more tedious than to have to go around the block to get next door, just because some pedant wants to exhibit his erudition. Too often the prerequisite course is simply designed to flatter the ego of the person who wants to give only an "advanced" offering. The effort of the take-off is always a strain; it would be so much easier if we could only start at cruising altitude.

The challenge that disturbs me, however, is not the normal student bridling at grammatics and pedagogy. I am concerned, rather, with an impatience that, if it persists, is catered to, and comes to dominate university life, might well be our undoing.

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One target of impatience is inaction. Its stimulus is the daily intimacy with the horrors of war, poverty, violence and oppression—all brought into the parlor on the television screen. Another is complexity. Hate and love seem so simple, so obvious and direct. Yet the structures of a technological society and its government seem hopelessly complicated, beyond the reach of most—seemingly unmanageable even to the few who do grasp the levers of power.

A third target is doubt. With a world to be saved, or simply a life to be lived, there is an overpowering urge to insulate yourself from the nagging, nibbling doubts that seem to spoil every confident hope and tarnish even the most ecstatic dream. Dogmatic assertion is a great belief. To some, blind fanaticism is "beautiful."

"Patience," we urge. But patience without purpose is boredom. So "relevance" becomes the slogan of an impatient generation. Their plea is for release from the tedium of learning without purpose. Better they should cry "significance," for the crisis of purpose transcends topical problems. Today's problems could be "solved," and still the vacuum of purpose would sap the patience that learning requires. Bright students would still perceive that their mastery even of "relevant" learning would often seem to be means without ends. Once "success" has lost its meaning, then why not seek purpose in subjective expression? All life is a happening. All that is asked is that you "do your thing."

I do think we should be more forthcoming in our admission of the weaknesses and contradictions in our university inheritance. We should recognize and admit that the university is not for all people, nor for most people at all times of their lives. It is not even the only or, for many, even the best circumstance for learning. Action, too, has its claim as a teacher of wisdom. Capacity can be extended and enlarged by doing as well as by thinking.

We should recognize also that as knowledge does become more relevant to operational decisions, universities do have an increasing professional and clinical function, for the potential operator as well as for the scholar. The applications of learning once associated primarily with law and medicine and engineering must spawn analogous applied sciences in social and environmental studies.

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Most of all we should admit that not all scholarship and learning are equally significant. "Relevance" may not be the test, if that word is used only in connection with topical problems; but the quality of intellectual excitement does depend on whether the scholar is truly opening a new perspective or is simply accumulating data that does not itself contribute to understanding. Definitiveness does not excuse the want of significance.

We must even admit that reason is not the only clue to truth. Intuition and creative imagination have their role in perception as well as in expression; in learning as well as in life. Not all that is perceived can be analyzed, let alone weighed or measured. Not all that is worth expressing can be "programmed." Not all that is "true" can be proved by objective evidence.

We should admit all this. We should leave room for, we should positively encourage, intuition, imagination, and the affirmation of revealed truth, even within the academy. We can acknowledge all these things, but we must continue to assert that impetuous action, conscious oversimplification, refusal to doubt, and the rejection of reason are enemies of the university.

The teacher's and the scholar's purpose is no different, no less than the purpose of any man whose highest aspiration is to make a constructive impact on the lives of others. It is to enlarge the capacities and opportunities of his fellowmen. The scholar, the critic no less than the scientist and the artist are driven by this hope. At best by genuine creation and discovery, at least by helping others to think or see or feel a little differently than they otherwise would have, this is the satisfaction that motivates the university membership. The university has no monopoly on this effort and its rewards. But the satisfaction is a moral satisfaction and we should not be sheepish in affirming it. Those who seek comparable and equally worthy satisfactions in the life of private and public action cannot expect to find that the life of the mind will sustain their ambition. But it must be defended fiercely by those to whom it is the essence of useful purpose.

A university must give its priority to the numerically small but historically significant band of men and women who believe that the worth and dignity of knowledge does not depend solely upon

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its current usefulness. They do not oppose action, but they do not see action as the only purpose of learning. To a university man wisdom and understanding are ends in themselves.

A university must also nurture the aspiration to understand the universe in all its parts. At its highest level, learning hopes to discover and perfect explanations of man and the cosmos that are not contradicted by any other part of human experience. There are no shortcuts.

A university must glory in the privilege of doubt. Intellectual progress is made by finding fault with the last best thought you had. Argument is for the purpose of learning, not for the therapy of dogmatic assertion. Serenity is sought in the exhaustion of reason, rather than by turning off the hearing aid.

Neither table pounding nor dreamy euphoria can be permitted to substitute for plausible argument. If impatience is not to be allowed to short-circuit argument with unsupported assertions, reason must be honored above the clash of crude and noisy enthusiasms and antipathies.

There is much more at stake than the desirability of letting scholar-teachers indulge their private satisfaction. There is even more at stake than the widening of the horizons of students, apprentices and the educated public.

I am struck by the learning and perception of a remarkable little book by E. R. Dodds: lectures he gave at Berkeley in 1949 and published a year later under the title *The Greeks and the Irrational*. He traces the gradual ascent of irrational elements in Hellenistic Greece and their eventual triumph over rationalism and all its potential glorious accomplishment. His concluding chapter is entitled the "Fear of Freedom." Rational choice, he notes, imposes a tremendous overload of moral responsibility. It is so much easier to abdicate choice to the world of irrational forces whatever their incarnation. As he says toward the very end:

I have had our own situation constantly in mind. We, too, have witnessed the slow disintegration of an inherited conglomerate, starting among the educated class but now affecting the masses almost everywhere, yet still very far from complete. We too have experienced a great age of rationalism, marked by scientific advances beyond anything

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that earlier times had thought possible, and confronting mankind with the prospect of a society more open than any it has ever known. And in the last forty years we have also experienced something else—the unmistakable symptoms of a recoil from that prospect. It would appear that, in the words used recently by André Malraux, "Western civilization has begun to doubt its own credentials."

What is the meaning of this recoil, this doubt? Is it the hesitation before the jump, or the beginning of a panic flight?

The universities alone cannot assure the optimistic answer to Professor Dodds's question. There are forces of both passion and politics that may override them. But, if we are not to slip into a dark age of irrationality, the universities must defend the ideal of objectivity. They must insist on following the dictate of evidence and reasoned argument. They must not acquiesce in the desire of the impatient to escape the moral responsibility for rational choice.

If we should slip into a dark age of irrationality, far better for the universities to live meagerly, while sticking to the integrity of reason, than to prosper elegantly in the corruption of a new orthodoxy.

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The Voyagers

CONRAD AIKEN

What to make
of human sake?
how take care
of man's despair?
or how heaven help us cope
with that inexplicable hope?
Twain unshapely
man and woman
forty or thirty
clean or dirty
by what miracle did they invent
that word human?

Let us start running
from this low cunning
look elsewhere
for solution of their hope
and despair
who somehow from darkness came
and now must darkness blame
or else admit "of origin unknown."
And this hand on
to generations born
of love and lust in-torn.
Pitiful creature!
With intolerable feature!
Yet in the mirror he admires
and sires.

Now mythic gods all gone
new gods come on

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those proliferated by the brain
and fingertips
see how we evolute
compute
commute
even to the moon.
Soon
the man-god comes. What then?
Will these be men?
Winged we are
but winged to fly how far?
Were it not better done
or say undone
beneath the skin
with scalpel and mind
to find
what hides within?
unravel
there
our travail?
And by whose compass shall we steer
right hand courage
left hand fear?
Or was this endless voyage, this godlike journey,
dreamed of only
by those who would be lonely—?

Then said the chinaberry tree
ah yes and what of me
and in the evening's winking golden shadow
the rose
also.

✪ *Preludes* is CONRAD AIKEN's most recent collection of poems.

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Equal Education and the Law

HERSHEL SHANKS

WELL OVER ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO Alexis de Tocqueville observed that Americans tend to transform their political, or social, problems into legal problems. The observation was as much a prophecy as a then present fact; the tendency persists, to say the least.

To some who observe the outcome only when it hits the morning paper, a decision of the Supreme Court often seems foreordained. The result either so conforms to one's own predilections that the Court's conclusion appears to be obvious, or is so at variance with those predilections that the Court's conclusion can be attributable only to a perverse, result-oriented liberalism, or worse. In truth, however, the outcome—as it appears before the event—is often far from clear and is worked out with a prodigious amount of legal effort and creativity.

Still very much in doubt is the outcome of one of these struggles in which educators and lawyers are attempting to transform—at least partially—a social problem into a legal problem. This account is in the nature of a progress report.

The social problem, in its broadest context, is the dismal state of many of the nation's public schools, especially in urban slums and poor rural areas. On the other hand, many of the nation's schools—especially in the affluent suburbs—are very fine indeed. Is there somewhere in this situation a legal wrong that a court might redress?

The obvious differences in quality between one public school

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and another immediately suggest to the constitutional lawyer the possibility of relief under what he refers to as the equal protection clause. This clause is contained in one of the post-Civil War Amendments to the Constitution—the Fourteenth—and provides simply that "No State shall . . . deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

One of the astonishing facets of our political democracy is that a simple phrase like Equal Protection should have been so monumentally extrapolated that it is now a major grant of legally enforceable rights. As interpreted by the courts, equal protection of the laws really means the protection of equal laws. The emphasis is not on "protection" (a more clinical word like "application" would serve as well), but on "equal." The laws must be "equal." Because black schools and white schools are not "equal," the Supreme Court struck down state laws requiring their separation. Because a city vote was not "equal" to a rural vote in most areas of the country, the Court struck down laws that malapportioned legislatures. As Mr. Justice Harlan has recently put it, "The equal protection clause prevents states from arbitrarily treating people differently under their laws."

Like that one, all definitions of equal protection reflect the fact that the law often treats its citizens unequally (or differently) for very sound reasons. Convicted criminals, unlike other citizens, are denied the right to vote. Men, unlike women, are required to serve in the armed forces, and even among men the law treats those between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five differently from men of other ages. Clearly the equal protection clause does not condemn the laws that make these distinctions, even though they apply or "protect" unequally. The equal protection clause forbids only distinctions that are inadequately justified, unreasonable or arbitrary. Thus the government may treat young men differently from old men, with respect to the draft. But it may not treat Negro children differently from white children, with respect to public schools.

This background may help the reader to appreciate why a constitutional lawyer might focus on the equal protection clause as a means of translating the social problem of inadequate schools into

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a legal problem. The vague perception, however, that the equal protection clause may offer some hope of relief is only the beginning of analysis, not the end.

This analysis has been undertaken by a dozen organizations, in a hundred seminars and meetings, and, by now, in a handful of scholarly articles and books, and it has been carried forward by the Urban Coalition, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, the National Education Association, the University of Chicago's Center for Policy Study, the newly established Law and Education Center at Harvard University, and local groups throughout the country that have been formed to develop and prosecute cases designed to bring some judicial relief to the problem of inadequate schools. The result has been a number of law suits—in Illinois, Michigan, California, Texas, Virginia, Florida and elsewhere—seeking a judicial solution to the quest for equal education.

The initial question for the groups behind these lawsuits was a policy question, rather than a legal one: Would a judicial victory based on the equal protection clause actually improve the schools? The social problem at the outset was inadequate schools, not unequal schools. But the legal consideration focused on the contrast that existed between inadequate schools and certain other better schools. In this contrast lay the possibility that a legal wrong might be found for which the courts would give redress. Even if the legal effort based on the equal protection clause were completely successful, this would result only in a judicial order that the states equalize schools, not that they improve them. In short, victory might mean a reduction in the quality of schools to the lowest common denominator, not an improvement so that all the schools within a state would be equal to the best. And this could destroy the public school system. A system of private schools for all who could afford them might well grow up in the more affluent areas, leaving the public school system as a whole in worse condition than ever. In addition, some have argued, too much emphasis on equality might eliminate the diversity, the freedom to experiment, that is the greater hope for improvement.

But those who decided to go forward obviously concluded that these risks were worth running, that as a practical or political mat-

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ter a judicial command to equalize schools would improve, not destroy, them. They guessed that those who control both the public schools and the legislatures, supported by the broad middle class who are entirely dependent on those schools, would force state legislatures to improve the schools in response to a judicial victory based on the equal protection clause.

The next question was to decide on the particular inequality that was to be the target of the legal attack. This involved conceptual problems concerning the meaning of equality in this particular context, as well as practical factual questions about the possible justification for a particular kind of unequal treatment.

There is so much that is unequal about schools within a state, it is hard to know where to begin a consideration of the inequality —textbooks, course offerings, school buildings, special programs, teaching staffs, more subtle environmental factors such as the abilities of a student's classmates, their socioeconomic status, their values and outlooks. And the justification—or lack thereof—varies with each inequality. Or one may take a different tack and ask whether providing an equal education requires a state to provide more and better facilities—that is, more education—in the slums to overcome the disadvantages with which slum children start the race; to provide an equal education, it can be argued, the state must take account of the differing educational needs of each child. Still another approach would be to attack the variations in per pupil expenditure within a state. In the end, the demonstrably unequal expenditures per pupil were the focus of most of the cases. Although more money would not automatically solve the problem, it would, most people believed, at least provide the poorer schools with an additional means of attacking the problem.

An attack on the inequality in per pupil expenditures within a state requires an examination of financing systems for the support of public education to determine the causes of the inequality and whether there are justifications that the state might use to support the inequality. Sometimes the inequality stems from an unfair state formula that distributes more money per pupil in the suburbs than in the central city. More often the inequality results from the fact that a major burden of school financing is placed on local govern-

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ments. In poverty areas, the school district simply cannot afford to finance adequate schools by local taxation; in the affluent suburbs, the local school district has no difficulty in providing adequate funding for its own schools. Is a state financing system adequately justified that places unequal burdens on different local communities, depending on their wealth?

The first case to be decided presented this question. Since it is now the leading case in the area, we shall look at it more closely. It is entitled *McInnis* v. *Ogilvie,* or simply the *McInnis* case.

The *McInnis* case was brought by a group of parents from Chicago's West Side who had banded together under the sobriquet Concerned Parents and Teachers of the West Side. The central thrust of the complaint they filed in the Federal District Court in Chicago was that the state scheme for financing public education necessarily results in a larger per pupil expenditure in some school districts than others, because it requires local communities to raise about two-thirds of their school funds from local real estate taxes, and that this financing scheme violates the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution.

In elementary schools, where the variation in per pupil expenditure is the greatest, some Illinois schools spend three times as much per pupil as others. On a school district basis—which includes not just elementary schools, but all levels of education—per pupil expenditures in Illinois vary from $480 per pupil in some school districts to $1,000 per pupil in others. While this disparity is extreme, the general pattern is clear, not only in Illinois but throughout the nation: the poorer school districts spend far less per pupil than do wealthy school districts. Nationally, spending levels in suburban schools average almost thirty percent in excess of the average for city schools ($573 to $449). And the extreme variation in expenditures per pupil in Illinois is not atypical. In California, expenditures per pupil vary between $265 and $1,353. In New York, they vary between $470 and $1,600.

The defendants in the Illinois suit (state officials from the Governor on down) promptly filed a motion to dismiss the suit on the ground that the plaintiffs had not stated a valid constitutional claim, that the state had no obligation to finance public education

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by a scheme that would equalize per pupil expenditures. The federal district court agreed with the defendants. The court conceded that "the inequities of the existing arrangement are readily apparent," but it could find no constitutional wrong. "The allocation of public revenues is a basic policy decision more appropriately handled by a legislature than a court." The court found in the Illinois scheme sufficient justification to satisfy constitutional requirements.

The Illinois scheme allowed responsibility for local schools to remain with local residents, and thus accrued the attendant benefits of decentralization and community participation. Local school districts were free to experiment in educational financing, which was a reasonable legislative choice, especially since Illinois assured a minimum school fund of $400 per pupil, regardless of the poverty of the district. And individual localities were free to determine their own tax burden according to the importance that they placed upon public schools. The Illinois legislative scheme for financing schools may be unwise, but it is not wholly without a basis in reason. And thus, said the court, despite the obvious inequality, the inequality is justified by an adequate rational basis to sustain its constitutionality.

The *McInnis* decision was indeed a setback, especially as it was the unanimous decision of a three-judge court. (A constitutional attack on a state statute brought in federal court must be heard by a district court of three judges.) Fortunately, however, the Supreme Court still sat in Washington, and it was there that the plaintiffs promptly repaired.

The Supreme Court's decision in the *McInnis* case was handed down on March 25, 1969. It is short enough to quote in its entirety. The Supreme Court said simply, "The motion to affirm is granted and the judgment [of the lower court] is affirmed."

There was no place else to go. The highest court in the land had spoken.

As might have been expected, the *McInnis* case was soon cited as precedent in a number of other similar suits in which the plaintiffs were thrown out of court. The question remains whether the issue is now dead.

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The answer is no—for at least three reasons. The first requires us to delve more deeply into very recent and far-reaching developments in the meaning of equal protection. The second requires us to ask why the Supreme Court ruled as it did in the *McInnis* case. And the third reason involves a look at another case that is already making its way through the courts.

Earlier in the discussion of equal protection, we said that it was not inequality that was unconstitutional, but unjustified inequality, unreasonable inequality. As stated in a 1935 Supreme Court case, which was quoted by the lower court in the *McInnis* case, "A statutory discrimination will not be set aside as the denial of equal protection of the laws if any state of facts reasonably may be conceived to justify it." It was by this standard that the lower court in *McInnis* made its determination that the Illinois statutes were sufficiently justified that they did not violate the equal protection clause.

In recent years, however, a stricter standard appears to have been applied in some cases. The emergence of this stricter standard began in cases where the Supreme Court declined to accept "any reasonable" justification for distinctions based on race. As early as 1944, the Court said that classifications based on race were "suspect" and therefore had to bear a greater burden of justification.

More recently, the Supreme Court appears to have required a greater burden of justification in certain cases in addition to those involving racial discrimination, although it was not very explicit about the matter.

Then on April 21, 1969, in what may well have been the most significant opinion of the 1968-69 term, the Court articulated more explicitly and in greater detail than it had ever done before a new—and far broader—standard for judging the constitutionality of legislation subjected to attack under the equal protection clause. And in a second case handed down on April 28, 1969, the Court enumerated the classes of cases to which the new standard was applicable. Taken together, these cases give the courts far broader power to strike down legislation on the basis of the equal protection clause than they have ever had before.

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The first case, handed down on April 21, involved the constitutionality of a one-year state residence requirement as a prerequisite to eligibility for welfare assistance. The plaintiffs claimed that the statute violated the equal protection clause because it treated residents of less than one year and residents of more than one year differently, without adequate justification. The importance of the case lies not so much in the fact that it struck down one-year residence requirements for welfare assistance, but in how the Court did it. The Court did not simply say that the one-year residence requirement was unreasonable because it has *no* legitimate legislative justification. The Court went on to say that even if there were reasonable grounds for a legislature's imposing a one-year residence requirement, this was not enough. In some cases, of which this was one, reasonable grounds for the law were not sufficient to sustain it against constitutional attack; in cases like this, an adequate justification required the state to demonstrate that the legislation in question served a *compelling* state interest. Said the Court:

> . . . [T]he traditional criteria [Does the legislation have some basis in reason or is it completely arbitrary?] do not apply in these cases . . . [The] constitutionality [of the inequality under attack here] must be judged by a stricter standard of whether it promotes a *compelling* state interest. [Italics in original]

This new interpretation of the equal protection clause vastly increases the scope of judicial review that the Court exercises over legislation, both state and federal. For a litigant to demonstrate that a statute is completely without reason is difficult indeed. But the test under the new standard is, "Does the legislative classification under attack promote a compelling state interest?" The shoe —or the burden—is on the other foot. Now the *state* must justify the statute, and do it by showing a compelling state interest.

In what cases does the new standard apply? First of all, as the welfare case makes clear, the new standard applies to legislation that impinges on the exercise of a constitutionally protected right. (In the welfare case, the constitutional right involved was the right to travel.)

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Other kinds of cases are more specifically identified in an opinion handed down a week after the welfare case, on April 28, 1969. The Court there made clear that the new and stricter standard it had articulated in the welfare case was also applicable where "fundamental rights," such as voting, are impinged upon by the legislation and also where the legislation under attack draws lines on the basis of race *or wealth*.

The significance for the equal education cases of this post-*McInnis* constitutional development of the equal protection clause may be easily seen. In the first place, education, like voting, may involve "a fundamental right." As the Supreme Court said in *Brown* v. *Board of Education*:

> Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments . . . [Education] is required in the performance of our most basic responsibilities, even service in the armed forces. It is the very foundation of good citizenship. Today it is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment. In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education.

Secondly, state financing statutes also appear to classify students according to wealth. The wealthier suburbs can afford an education far beyond that of the urban ghetto. What kind of education a child gets depends in large part on how valuable the real estate is in the school district in which he happens to live. Thus it would seem that the plaintiffs have an excellent argument that the "compelling state interest" test is applicable to the equal education cases, both because a fundamental right is involved (the right to an education) and because the state statutes discriminate on the basis of wealth. It would be extremely difficult to find a compelling state interest that justifies the complex of state statutes that provide a $1200 education to the suburban child and a $400 education to the ghetto child.

Why then did the Supreme Court affirm the decision of the lower court in *McInnis*? There is no way to know for certain, because the Supreme Court did not give any reasons for its ruling.

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But it seems safe to assume that, by its affirmance, the Supreme Court did not intend to put its imprimatur on the broad rulings of the lower court. To have done so would have been inconsistent with its own rulings of less than one month later in the welfare case. Much more likely, the Supreme Court's decision in *McInnis* can be accounted for on very narrow grounds, grounds that may not be present in a subsequent case. For example, the plaintiffs sought to obtain a decree that would apportion public funds according to educational need (a highly unmanageable concept from a court's point of view), rather than to obtain only the elimination of discrimination based on the wealth of the local district. The Supreme Court's affirmance may represent only a rejection of the plaintiffs' unnecessarily broad position. There are a number of similar, if technical, bases on which the *McInnis* case will likely be distinguished from cases that will be presented in the future.

Moreover, it can be argued that the Supreme Court's decision in *McInnis* is nothing more than a refusal to review the lower court's decision. Although the *McInnis* case is not one in which the Supreme Court technically had the option to decline to review (as it can in most cases where its review is sought), the Court nevertheless treated the case in much the same way as it does those cases where it is free to announce simply that it will exercise its discretion *not* to hear the case. This is evidenced by the fact that the Court made its decision only on the basis of a jurisdictional statement and without full briefs addressed to the merits of the case; the Court did not permit oral argument on the case; and the Court gave no reason for its decision. If this is indeed tantamount to a refusal to review, then the Supreme Court may have based its decision on nothing more than the conclusion that the issue was not ripe for review at that time or that the record was defective.

That the *McInnis* case does not foreclose success in other similar cases is suggested by the final case that we will examine, *Hargrave* v. *McKinney,* which may well turn out to be the first victory in the equal education cases.

The *Hargrave* case, which is being underwritten by the Na-

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tional Education Association, grew out of the school crisis that gripped the state of Florida in February and March, 1968, a crisis that included the first statewide teacher walkout in history. As part of the package passed by a special session of the legislature to increase state appropriations for education and end the walkout, Florida also passed a statute limiting to a maximum of ten mills the tax rate that a county could impose on local real estate for purposes of public education. If a county exceeded the ten-mill limit, its state school funds would be cut off. Twenty-four Florida counties had imposed tax rates on themselves exceeding this ten-mill ceiling. In one county the rate was eighteen mills. The new legislation required each of these twenty-four counties to reduce its tax rate (since they could not possibly do without state funds), and for this reason the legislation was known popularly as the millage rollback act.

After the teacher walkout ended, discontent at the inadequacy of the financial support that the legislature had given to public education continued to smolder. Especially rankling was the millage rollback act, which effectively prevented counties from raising funds previously approved by their own voters. Was there any way to invalidate the millage rollback act? the teachers asked their lawyers.

On the surface, it would appear that the millage rollback act was well within the power of a state legislature. After all, the counties are the creatures of the state and they cannot collect taxes not authorized by the legislature. But a state legislature is also bound by the Constitution's equal protection clause.

What is unequal, however, about a ten-mill limit on a county's taxing authority for educational purposes? The answer proceeds along the following lines and explains how this case, the only purpose of which was to invalidate a piece of legislation that Florida teachers believed unwise, came to affect—perhaps crucially—the equal education cases: The legislature, by its ten-mill ceiling, authorizes Charlotte County, Florida, for example, to collect $725 per pupil, while Bradford County is authorized to collect only $52 per pupil. This is inequality with a vengeance, and arises from the fact that Charlotte County's tax base per

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pupil is approximately fourteen times that of Bradford County. In other words, Charlotte County is far richer (in relation to its school population) and as a result of that fact the Florida legislature allows it to tax itself far more per pupil than other counties may.

Whether this is constitutionally permissible depends, first of all, on what standard of justification is applicable—do we ask whether the inequality is based on a compelling state interest or do we ask whether there is any rational basis to a statute that creates this inequality? Secondly, we must ask whether the justification for the statute meets the applicable standard. As we have already indicated, the stricter standard—the compelling state interest test—would seem to be applicable here because of the fundamental rights involved and the fact that lines are drawn on the basis of wealth.

The only justification for the millage rollback act that has thus far been advanced is that it prevents local governments from taxing themselves or the county into a depression. Given the state of the economy and the extent of federal and other governmental controls over the economy, the millage rollback act hardly seems to be supported by a compelling state interest. It may well lack adequate justification even under the "any rational basis" test.

The first judge to rule on the *Hargrave* case, however, threw it out on technical grounds, without even convening a three-judge court. While a ruling of a three-judge court is appealed directly to the Supreme Court, a ruling by a single district judge is appealed to the Court of Appeals. Accordingly, the plaintiffs in the *Hargrave* case took an appeal to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, which hears appeals in desegregation cases from most of the federal district courts in the Deep South. It is a court that is accustomed to difficult cases.

In the *Hargrave* case, the Fifth Circuit split two to one. The dissenter, Judge Griffin B. Bell of Georgia, argued that the case was controlled by the Supreme Court's decision in *McInnis,* which had been handed down after the single district judge had dismissed the *Hargrave* complaint. Therefore, according to Judge Bell, the lower court was correct in dismissing the case even if the

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lower court was wrong on the technical ground on which it based its ruling. The majority, however, disagreed. "We readily observe," wrote Judge Richard T. Rives of Alabama for the majority, "that prior decisions of the federal judiciary do not foreclose consideration of plaintiffs' equal protection argument. See [the] *McInnis* [case]." Thus, Judge Rives indicated that the *McInnis* case was not the end of the line, that it really settled very little. The majority continued:

> The allegations of the complaint posit a fact situation which, under recently elasticized theories of equal protection, gives rise to a constitutional claim. . . . Noting that lines drawn on wealth are suspect and that we are here dealing with interests which may well be deemed fundamental, we cannot say there is no reasonably arguable theory of equal protection which would support a decision in favor of the plaintiffs.

The court did not say that the plaintiffs were right, but it could not say they had no case either. So the court returned the suit to the single district court judge with directions to convene a three-judge court to decide it.

The Fifth Circuit handed down its decision on June 9, 1969, and that is where the case now stands. The case may ultimately be decided by the Supreme Court.

What would a victory in the *Hargrave* case mean?

A reasonable expectation is that a victory for the plaintiffs in the *Hargrave* case would establish the principle that a state may not use the wealth of the local community—which is unrelated to the educational needs of the community—as the measure of the financial support that the community may give to public education. This holding could, of course, provide the springboard for a broader attack on existing educational inequalities that result from the variations within a state of the wealth of different school districts. How far the principle would be expanded in subsequent cases is difficult to predict. It might well carry to victory the next set of plaintiffs who challenge a *McInnis*-like situation, for in both *Hargrave* and the *McInnis*-like situation the state effectually draws lines on the basis of wealth.

While a victory in a *McInnis*-like case will clearly require a

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revamping of state laws providing for the funding of public education, it will not, as is sometimes claimed, eliminate local taxes as a prime source of funds for public education. What success in a *McInnis*-like case will do is to break the now necessary relation between a local community's wealth and the kind of schools it gets. Once this divorce is made, there is a myriad of acceptable state financing laws. The state could, of course, fund public education solely through state taxes, distributing all necessary funds to the local communities based on some reasonable formula related to the educational needs of the local community (rather than to the wealth of the local community). But it could also break the link between community wealth and the financial level of support for public schools without eliminating local taxes as a major source of public school funding. The key to accomplishing this within the strictures of a victory in a case like *McInnis* is to provide that the production of local funds depend on effort (that is, the tax rate) rather than on the wealth of the community (that is, the tax base).

To illustrate, let us say that the state will provide fifty percent of the necessary financial support for public education by appropriation to the local community. The dollar amount of this appropriation would depend on the number of pupils in the system. Additional funds would be provided by the local community depending on the tax rate imposed on itself by the local community (but *not* depending on its wealth as reflected in the tax base). Let us say ten mills will produce the additional fifty percent needed for an adequate system. Any local community that imposes this ten-mill rate will get the additional fifty percent. If the community is a poor one in which a ten-mill tax will produce only twenty-five percent, rather than fifty percent, of what is needed, the difference will be paid by the state. If it is a wealthy community in which a ten-mill tax will produce seventy-five percent, rather than fifty percent, of what is needed, the excess will be paid to the state. Thus the result in a local community will depend on effort (the tax rate) rather than wealth (the tax base). And the local community will still be free to set its own level of effort, depending on the importance it places on education.

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The very fact that there is this simple alternative to remedy the *McInnis*-like inequality is a strong argument that this inequity is inadequately justified by the state, and is therefore unconstitutional.

And what is beyond a victory in the *McInnis* kind of situation? The next question is whether the state has an affirmative obligation to provide an equal education to its children, even though the inequality does not result from lines drawn on the basis of wealth—as it does in the *McInnis*-like situation. What if, for example, it costs more to educate properly a ghetto child than a suburban child? Is the ghetto child entitled to demand as a constitutional right that he be given the same education as the suburban child, even though it may cost more to educate him than the suburban child? And what of the blind child? Or the deaf child? Can they make the same demand? And what of the case where the inequality results not from differences in the tax base—as in a *McInnis* case—but from the fact that there are greater demands on local taxes in the city with its need for greater welfare expenditures and police protection? Can a city plead poverty because it must spend its money on other things besides schools? Perhaps the safest course is to note only that these are the kinds of legal questions that are opened by the thrust of current litigation. What will be the ultimate course of this constitutional development cannot be foretold.

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POEMS

MELVILLE CANE

Eloquent April

April, awakening
hour, the word itself a quickening!

Take the initial, *A*, open
and eager to call in
the fresh aerial currents of the North.

Then, *p*, *r*, tools to pry and prod
the stubborn sod
and warm it to rebirth.

Finally, *i* and *l*,
Liquid, lyrical
to the tongue,
high-charged with promises of song
and Spring!

April, sign of Aries,
Arise!

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Time Enough For That

I'm sorry for all those who have
agreed to grow old. I haven't agreed yet.
—E. B. White, New York *Times,* July 11, 1969

I quite agree with White.

As far as blood incites,
as long as spirit burns
I'll follow my concerns
as always, more or less,
with no especial stress
on what was once
or since,
or what may chance to be.

As long as I keep free
and sane, and sound of breath,
there'll be no truck with death,
I'll make no pact with death.

There's time enough, however late,
for that.

✪ MELVILLE CANE'S latest book is *All and Sundry: An Oblique Autobiography.* Subsequent to his ninetieth birthday, on April 15, 1969, Mr. Cane has signed a contract with his publisher for a further book of poetry and prose.

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Last Stop on the D Train

In the Land of the New Racists

LEONARD KRIEGEL

HOME IS NOT SO MUCH A PLACE as it is an idea of a place, a geography of the mind in which strangers and natives alike find refuge when thrust against the landscape of the familiar. The territory of the street is your own, the way you first knew the shape of summer's freedom. And now every scrawny bush, every crack in the sidewalk, every tree cut down to make way for progress infuses your own past with a reality almost Platonic. The problem is to remember it as it actually was, to stay clear of sentiment, to be able to say "This was my world" without inundating the here and now. The difficulty is that you, if a true city boy, measure even the here and now against the blistered reality still clinging to your mind, the way the images first coalesced, when you were ten or eleven, and the ideal of neighborhood burst from your own dreams. City boy still: for to belong is to love, even when it is also to reject.

And so, no matter where you are—Chelsea, The Hague, London, Rome—home remains what the past opposes to the place at which you are staying. Try as you may, ridicule yourself as you may (the voice that whispers, "Who wants to remain a Bronx initiate all his life? Let memories of Poe Park Becky die!"), home remains "the neighborhood," which you have come to think of as your parents think of Galicia, *der haym,* their memories studded with drunken peasants, and filled with the sharp smells of the living burying the dead, but soothed by order, an understandable, natural order. For even when you believed that the neighborhood was challenging your prospects—there are brokers

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in the most vital of imaginations—it possessed an understandable, a natural, order. Events, things, people, even time, all fell into place. The neighborhood absorbed.

It ran from Mosholu Parkway (pronounced *Moshoolah* by those who never knew it as home) on the east to Webster Avenue on the south, Gun Hill Road on the west, Jerome Avenue on the north. The boundaries are arbitrary. Why not include that part of Bronx Park on the other side of the police precinct house, French Charlie's, the first baseball field you ever played on? There is no answer, except that the red Victorian gingerbread of the police station loomed above the Webster Avenue El tracks, and the giant clock on its tower signaled not time but boundary. Definition was a necessity. Arbitrary . . . but also real, the way it was.

It was not the worst place in the world in which to come of age, that corner of the Bronx with its children of immigrant Jews waiting for the socialist millenium, its Italian construction workers, its Irish bus drivers. Even then a working and lower-middle-class neighborhood, the ambitions of its inhabitants were reflected in the uneven line of house against sky. There were trees on the street, there was the Parkway, and there was Bronx Park for the times you wanted to risk the unknown, still wild enough then so that you might, on occasion, stub your toe on a gnarled root and come up with an arrowhead; there was Van Cortlandt Park, the name synonymous not merely with the foreign (all the names fitted that category) but also with the expectation of wealth and the promise of a technicolor movie; there was the Oval, once a reservoir, then filled in by the W. P. A. during the Depression to house playgrounds and ball fields and a quarter-mile dirt track for running or bike riding; and there was P. S. 80 with its three large yards urging you to test your skill for fifteen minutes every day after lunch. (Memory encrusts the pride: you were the only fifth grader to hit a baseball on the fly from home plate to the cyclone fence at the other end.) Above all, there was the street, scarred by the movement of seasonal games: chestnut season, scully season, marble season, skating season, baseball, football, stickball, punchball, boxball, all of them blending in memory into a single clear October day.

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Across the street from the Oval, a few yards of weed-strewn lawn off Bainbridge Avenue, there was an old stone house in which Washington was said to have slept. The house has been moved next to the Oval now. It is some kind of museum or public monument, but its function, no matter how public, will not change the anachronism. Where it used to stand, there is a new apartment building, as nondescript as the old apartment buildings, blending in with them, except for the air-conditioning sleeves, a pretense at affluence. You knew that the stone house was inhabited, for rumor said it was, but you had never seen people going in and out as they did in other houses. It served as the neighborhood's ghost house, stranded there, a fact from history, a line to the past that you were told was yours in P. S. 80. Among all these four- and five-story apartment buildings, a colonial stone house. And sometimes, after school, you would find yourself walking past it, repeating the names of the streets, an incantation meant to drive you, too, back into that mythical time: Hull Avenue, Perry, De Kalb, Rochambeau, Bainbridge, Gun Hill Road. Life and death mingled; time and desire and belonging and the need to prove yourself an American.

I left the neighborhood in 1957. I had left it before, but this time it was for good. I was twenty-four years old, just married, in pursuit of something I could not label but that I knew was not to be found on these streets. I moved to Chelsea in Manhattan, a distance of some sixteen miles on the West Side Drive or some eighteen or nineteen stops on the I.N.D. Line's D Train. But only if one measures space. In time, it was easily as great as the distance that separates a corn-fed Kansas provincial and a Greenwich Village hipster. The axiom is accurate; the boy from the true provinces comes to Manhattan armed with the wariness of his ignorance, while those of us who came from the Bronx had to pretend to a sophistication we simply did not possess. Weren't we, too, New Yorkers by right of birth? Had not we, too, traveled the subways to the Museum of Natural History? (Twice: the first time when I was eight years old and ran away from home with another boy and got off the train, quite accidentally, at 81st Street; another

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time with my fifth-grade class under the aegis of Miss Burgi, who passionately desired to expose us to what she called "your beautiful world.") The truth was that I was terrified of "downtown," for I was not at all certain what the sophistication that I was expected to possess was. But in a few weeks that sophistication could be assumed and the fear dissipated itself in the satisfaction of living in the "real" New York. The memory of my hesitant, cursory excursions downtown was now simply brushed aside.

Occasionally, I would return to visit my family. Like me, most of my friends had departed from the neighborhood. With the few who remained, I had little to share other than the memories of childhood and adolescence. In time, I stopped looking for them and went directly from the subway to my parents' apartment. In getting out, I had made it; in staying, they hadn't. I was exploring different directions now. The neighborhood embarrassed me.

It was a predominantly Jewish neighborhood, but the street on which I lived, and on which my parents live today, was Irish Catholic. There were, of course, a number of other Jewish families, some Italians, and even a scattering of those whose roots in America went back far enough so that they were able to think of themselves simply as Americans. In the middle of the street, there was a Lutheran church, but I did not know anybody who was a Lutheran. The church seemed misplaced and alien. The Christians I knew, lived among and fought, attended St. Brendan's, the Catholic church around the corner, and those of my friends who did not go to P. S. 80 attended the parochial school attached to the church. St. Brendan's was a rather nondescript red church; it looked as if it had been left over from a Paddy Chayefsky film. A few years ago it was torn down, and the new St. Brendan's is an ultramodern church built in the form of a ship.

I grew up with a peculiar relationship to the Irish. The films I saw and the books I read told me that the Irish were a rugged, romantic people, but the people around me in the neighborhood seemed dry and withered, aged before their time. Even their children lacked youth. When they grew older they drank too much and made love too little. I remember the priest at St. Brendan's as always eating ice cream and walking down the street with the

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Journal-American tucked beneath his arm, his face fleshy and almost as florid as Hearst's headlines. When I saw my first O'Casey play, I was stunned when I realized that the people about whom he was writing were the grandparents of my Irish friends. For in the neighborhood the Irish were not like the Jews and not like the Italians. They were tight, they moved suspiciously, they seemed uncomfortable with their bodies, and they lacked imagination.

And yet, I liked them. They redeemed the absence of romance, redeemed even the absence of imagination, through a certain concern with proprieties. Soon after I became ill with polio in 1944, the candles were lit and prayers offered at St. Brendan's. The people were narrow and, even for our neighborhood, provincial, but they tried to behave decently, which is, I have discovered, the greatest virtue of the working-class Irish. The idea that they could demand anything from life had not really penetrated among them. Despite their churchgoing, they had little potential for sainthood, even less for the demonic. They were common people, in all that the term suggests, living out lives that can best be described as commonplace. In the fifties they were told by a large number of politicians and a small number of bad writers that they were the salt of the earth. This did not help them, for they rarely believed politicians and they never read writers, good or bad. Money, fame, fortune—they listened and shrugged. Accidents were not to be questioned, and money was an accident, as were fame and fortune. And not to be envied either. Their sons might ultimately rebel, might try to swallow the world whole as they became true Americans. The older people were too busy trying to live in it.

Whenever I have been away from the neighborhood for a long time, I am suspicious of my emotions when I return. When I drove up to the neighborhood on a hot Sunday afternoon last September, I had to force perspective on my world. I was coming home after a sabbatical year in Europe. For a year, I had been a spectator of America's anguish. From the sanctuary of a family hotel in the *Hoge Veluwe,* where I had gone to see the Van Gogh collection in the Kroller-Müller Museum, I had watched Aronow Auditorium burn, as white and black confronted a similarity greater than they

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knew on the ragged campus of City College. Somehow, it had not seemed altogether real.

But it had been real. Just as Mosholu Parkway, down which I was now driving, was real. I found myself surprised at how the geography had remained more or less as I remembered it, just as City College, to which I had returned a few days earlier, had seemed as attractively raunchy as when I had left, the boarded-up windows of Aronow's simply absorbed into the general seediness of the grounds. I had expected some fundamental change in the neighborhood, the ground leveled by bulldozers maybe. But what my eyes saw was the sharp familiarity, the boundaries of childhood stretching out before me like some half-forgotten painting caught once again on the piercing sweep of line that brings not only the frame but the entire picture into focus once again. Shape and memory. The few changes—new saplings in the center of the Parkway every ten yards or so, where once there had been thick solid trees—merely sharpened the focus.

And yet, the Parkway *was* different. For, as I drove, I became increasingly aware of a dinginess, a mean and squalid old age hovering just above the line of buildings and open sky. There were still adolescents slicing the air with their footballs. It was between seasons now and a softball game was in progress on the grass across from P. S. 80. The grass seemed scrawny, as if it were looking forward to the death of summer. Perhaps it had never been anything but scrawny.

A number of people, perhaps twenty in all, were sitting on aluminum chairs on the sidewalk bordering the eastern side of the Parkway, their faces raised to the sun. Most of them were old, retired, waiting for death. When I was a child, the old people sat on wooden crates instead of aluminum chairs; otherwise, the scene was familiar. The houses on the other side of the Parkway were still a mixture of Bronx Tudor and Thirties Modern, one of them a building that had collapsed while it was being built during the Depression. A number of the laborers had died, an event that formed, according to a friend of mine, the basis for Pietro Di Donato's *Christ in Concrete*. It did not matter whether it was true. And I never bothered to check. The neighborhood always

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struggled for meaning. To be even the possible suggestion for a book was bound to be welcome.

I parked the car, got out, and began to walk parallel to the Parkway. At first, I did not realize why the scene depressed me so. Then I realized that I had come full circle. For these people were the new enemy, people whom I, along with most other radical and liberal intellectuals in New York, had dismissed as "white racists." These were the men and women whom my more "militant" students sneer at with a withering contempt. (*Militant*: the word brings to mind a hand blading the air with its rhetorical courage as the coin spins away, either heads or tails and who *cares?* In this kind of game, the only losers are people. The currency of commitment is to be spent at all costs.) My more militant students are themselves the sons and grandsons of these despised, children of the jailers. Radical professors, student activists, the fancy prose stylists of the *Village Voice,* the whole of what Harold Rosenberg once labeled the "herd of independent minds," on whom else could they grind their knives? Swinger and Weatherman alike, hippie and yippie, for all these the enemy has become clearly identifiable. Jewish cabdrivers, Italian bricklayers, Irish bartenders, *the white racists,* gray, washed out in the bright colors of the approaching revolution. And here they were, lining the sidewalk in front of me. I was standing in the land of the faceless, the millenium snorting down my neck, cataloguing all these lives against the blank border into which they were destined to disappear.

I walked over to Bainbridge Avenue and then I walked to where the Fordham Road bus stopped on 206th Street. For a moment, my mind was back in those summer nights, and I was standing on this corner, fear spurring me on to exercise my wit in game after game of *the dozens,* verbal lashings edged with the dry hysteria of some Bronx warrior reaching for it all but not yet able to give in to his desires as he mothered the irrational in himself. An old woman holding a white umbrella stood by the bus stop, waiting. The sky was cloudless blue. She gripped the umbrella tightly. No one else was around.

During my time on the corner, simply to hold your own had

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been enough. In the forties and fifties, you copped your manhood by demonstrating skill with language. Language was power. Before that, it had been skill with your hands. But by my time, it was just a case of having to be smarter, more cutting, to dip your mind in salt or brine before you edged out of your apartment at night. Corner boy: which meant that you had to be nasty enough and brave enough to pass the test of the corner.

The old woman got on her bus. No one got off. The corner was deserted except for me. There were no more people and so there were no more gamblers. It was here that Pete the Bookie (not Runyonese, it was simply a neighborhood in which you were known by the job you did) used to hold court while the people inveighed against the drabness of the neighborhood's fate, its slender huskings and slim pickings. Gambling was the great social passion, as if one could stave off decay and mortality with two dollars on the right horse. Everybody gambled. "For pleasure!" I once heard a cab driver's wife scream at her husband when he accused her of gambling his salary away. "What else do you give me?" In the neighborhood, gambling, like socialism for some, was a form of therapy. It was fitting that what I knew about gambling had been taught me by my uncle the furrier, who, when he wasn't telling me of how the world had to be refashioned by and for the working class, would teach me the art of handicapping horses.

I half expected to see Little Howie on the corner. But Howie was dead, a neighborhood suicide. If I looked up, I could see the roof from which he had jumped. One would have expected something neater of Howie, who had lived by slide rules and wood carving. He was one of the few craftsmen in a neighborhood of pieceworkers. When I was nine, he taught me how to play shortstop, patiently forcing me to keep my glove down and get a jump on the ball. That was just after he had been rejected by the army for the second time. All through the war, Howie tried to enlist, but he was one half-inch too short and he wound up a flight mechanic at La Guardia. And then he just quit: he stopped working and became the Mayor of the Corner. He held court in front of the candy store, arbiter, adjudicator, legislator, offering

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his fund of statistics and information (much of it culled from the *World Almanac)* to all comers. And for what? Well, for one thing, for free. And also for love, for hunger, for fear, for loneliness. Judge and jury alike. In the coffin at the funeral parlor he already seemed unreal, skinnier than I remembered him, like some overpriced doll that stares down at you wide-eyed from the windows of F. A. O. Schwarz on Fifth Avenue.

Ours was the last stop on the line and drunks would periodically stumble out of the subway. Drunks were not unusual, nor did we pay very much attention to them. They didn't travel with the Yonkers-bound men and women who would swarm out during rush hour to catch the buses that would take them home for dinner. Not as a rule anyway. But, occasionally, the rush-hour crowd would clear a path for an emerging drunk, the distaste visible in their faces and stiffening spines. "So I'm drunk. But look at them, running from their own goddamn souls." I was standing with my friend Jack on the corner, leaning against the subway exit, watching the press on the buses as the late August evening approached. The drunk put a hand on my shoulder, tried to steady himself, then lurched forward until Jack caught him and jammed him, as gently as possible, against the side of the candy store. The two of us held him erect until he regained his balance. He laughed. Then he began to talk. He talked about Glasgow, about how he had shipped over while still in his teens, about making his way out West. We wound up in Larry Campbell's bar and for the next three hours he talked; he was all language and memory, and we listened. The voice was authentic as it told us of Big Bill Haywood, of the Memorial Day Massacre in Chicago, of Debs and the I. W. W. and John L. Lewis (whom he called "the buustid"), strikes, deaths, battles, a line of meaningful violence stretched clear across the country. I still needed heroes then and I quickly adopted him. For it was Big Bill Haywood, as well as Debs and Joe Hill, who had married the world of Eastern European Jews—with its pogroms, its Russian priests, its sour-breathed Cossacks, its terror and disease and massacres and, above all, its dream of the Socialist Coming—to that America whose streets were paved with gold and which, I had been taught,

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needed little more than a redistribution of that gold to match the dream. "Never mind what they do to you," he advised us as we escorted him back into the subway, old and fragile and very drunk. "Just stick to your own. Never forget who you are."

But I have not stuck to my own. Instead, I have chosen to rub against the grain of this America, this *goldena medina,* and have learned to pigeonhole present and past, everything and everybody in the proper niche. American intellectuals today rather desperately strive to keep in fashion, a temptation I have not been particularly successful at resisting. I have accepted categories thrust upon the world I live in by legions of reformers who see only the kind of suffering that intellectual fashion tells them is current. And when I ask myself who these working-class racists about whom we speak so glibly are, I find that they are the people in my neighborhood, Jews, Italians and Irishmen, whose very lives are now being bleached into invisibility. And by their own grandchildren, as well as by those for whom they were never visible in the flesh but existed only in a sentimentalized myth called the working class.

They do not earn enough money to partake of the affluence they are told so scornfully is theirs; they are confused by and hostile to intellectuals for whom they have become an abstraction; they struggle to keep themselves afloat in a sea of indifference. Unlike so many radical intellectuals, they never laid claim to Gatsby's orgiastic future—and one wonders whether it is this, rather than their "racism," that has earned them such contempt. And now that future has been thrust before them, like strawberry shortcake, but they are told it is not theirs to consume. No participatory democracy for them, for *they* (a peculiar inversion, that) would not know what to do with it.

To believe that these workers are "middle class" is to construct a reality in which the foul rag and bone shop of the heart that Yeats wrote about has been absorbed, by the very people who should know better, into methodological convenience. For to insist that their "racism" is what plagues America is to define both them and racism out of meaningful existence. The truth is far

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simpler than that. And far more elementary and complex, too. For the people in my neighborhood feel themselves victims of a world that increasingly treats their problems with smug indifference or outright contempt. They know that they suffer, but they feel that few are interested in their suffering. Their air, too, is polluted, their schools overcrowded. The bureaucracy that measures their lives out in statistics is incompetent when it is not helpless; the tax structure is unjust. They fear retirement and personal obsolescence, and, above all, they smolder with resentment of a society for which they have been made the propitiatory sacrifice, as it reaches for every gimmick, every comprehensive cure-all, like a pickpocket turned loose in a carnival sideshow. They did not create this America, regardless of what their descendants and LeRoi Jones believe, nor have they benefited so greatly from it, regardless of what Fire Island radicals tell themselves over cocktails. My neighborhood is not belching with either affluence or indifference, and its streets are not cluttered with $13,000-a-year electricians or $15,000-a-year bricklayers.

And so I discovered that Ellison's Invisible Man has a new brother, the Irish-Jewish-Italian worker. He has been pinned to the wall and labeled: *the racist.* And here they were, these people clinging to the passing summer by the broken railings of Mosholu Parkway. Some of them were grandfathers of the revolution that never came, and now they sit and sun themselves and number among their kind a few, a very few by now, who can rattle off party congresses and five-year plans and who, if you make the mistake of listening, can tell you exactly how Stalin outmaneuvered Trotsky, how Malenkov followed Stalin, how Khrushchev followed Malenkov, and how the revolution had moved from Faust to the latest clerks in the attic, Kosygin and Brezhnev. "Did you ever read, with your education you must have read, did you ever read . . .?" The voice trails off, dies, strangles in its own anguish. Hungary. Czechoslovakia. Anti-Semitism on the Left. The way you die on Rochambeau Avenue. This is not the way they had conceived it. "In America, they kill you with candy," my grandmother (no socialist, she) used to say. Whenever she said it, my uncle the furrier would choke on his coffee.

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Perhaps it is only in memory that true faith is invested. I remember two Italian anarchists who repaired my shoes (Jews own candy stores, Italians own shoe repair shops, Irishmen own bars: a Bronx syllogism), who stood all day long, mannequins with leathery faces, and worked on shoes. When I came home from the hospital at thirteen, they taught me the words to *Avanti Popolo*. Tacked on the wall, staring down at them as they worked, an old picture of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, his country squire's face cut from the *Daily News* rotogravure (a minor irony that) and faded with time and dust and so many heels nailed, soles glued, hats blocked, so much leather polished. Roosevelt, they insisted, was a working-class saint. When I went to college, I would try to argue with them. But it did no good. They insisted that Roosevelt had been a great *sooshalista* trying to break the power of the oppressor, to bring down all the banks and churches and corporations. The evidence: "Dey killa heem. For why?"

The shoe repair shop is gone, but there is a new one a few doors down. It was closed. Perhaps the two Italian anarchists are there now. I do not know. The barber shop next door, where I used to get my hair cut, has disappeared. The Mosholu Jewish Center Hebrew School, which my father forced me to attend, socialist millenium or no, used to have more than two hundred students; it has about forty now. Bainbridge Avenue is no longer very interesting. It is dominated by a large new supermarket and a very modern bank. My father, now on social security (Roosevelt, that *sooshalista*, at least gave him that, although my father would not understand were I to explain that part of the credit should be reserved for Huey Long and Dr. Townsend), supplements his income when the store is occasionally shorthanded and he is called to help out for a few hours. The bank was established after the war, prospered, soon outgrew its accommodations, and has built newer, safer, colder, better-for-depositors quarters next to the supermarket. The lot behind the bank, where I used to play touch football, has been leveled and tarred over: it is a parking lot for the bank's employees now. Bainbridge Avenue is drab and almost sedate, for the drabness is modern and indiscriminate. The

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corner is dead. And not only on Sundays in September. The young people do not use it any more. Drugs have killed street life in New York for the young. Drugs and Greenwich Village. Or maybe 42nd Street. A syringe, pot, the hunger of adolescents for something larger than the neighborhood—in any case, the streets are over. The corner bores the young people, and the old pass it by.

And I wonder whether what I am feeling is a different guilt now. I will not flagellate myself with this guilt, if for no other reason than that I have had enough of intellectuals who flail away at themselves in public. It is useless and distasteful and the *mea culpa* has been recited by too many of late. But I have done my share, at least as a teacher, of accommodating myself to the questionable rhetoric that has gutted the real issues plaguing this America beneath the psychic flanges and hip neuroses of radical fashionability. I have heard myself in class, shoulder to the wheel and mind to the metaphor, when my rhetoric could match that of any masseur of the public conscience who speaks from the hollows of the *Village Voice*.

In any case, the problem is not to assess guilt. That, one suspects, might be easy, even for those in my neighborhood. No Southern Bourbons, they, no, nor high-powered industrialists peddling their power in smoke-filled rooms: the images are from the thirties, but grant me, at least, a purpose. For the real problem with which we are faced is the question of price. Who pays to bail out this country? And how much must be paid? There we have the heart of the matter.

For the truth is, there is nothing I can now say to the people in my neighborhood. Certainly not to these disillusioned park-bench socialists waiting for the end, for they never construed the radical vision to mean what my students think it means. Even when their politics are radical, working-class people are basically conservative. They would not understand what rock festivals have to do with changing the lot of the poor (which does not, I hasten to add, make the music or its audience any less attractive). The vocabulary is different, even if the words are the same. How do you explain *life-style* to a man who still wonders how different it might have been if Trotsky . . .? Do you tell him about Marcuse?

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Or Ken Kesey? Or Timothy Leary? Do you offer him his pick of quotations from the new Buddha's *Little Red Book?*

I tried on that hot September afternoon. I went back to the Parkway and collared one of those old men. Racism, I offered. "So," he said, "nobody here created it. You think it's new?"

This kind was new enough. Anyway, it wasn't a question of new or old. It had to be changed. "The system creates it," he answered. "When people aren't permitted to be people, that's how it gets created. So what do you want? To be Robin Hood with my life?"

He had to understand. Nothing to do with him personally. Things had to be made different. "For you, they're already different," he said. "When I was your age, radical meant you fought for the poor. You think you discovered racism? You think we didn't know? And who's going to pay? Park Avenue?" He waved his hand indicating the houses lining the west side of the Parkway. "From us you're going to take, right? That's your socialism."

It wasn't quite that way, I explained. A simple question of priorities. "You're a fool," he said. "You don't even know that you think we should pay. But we have nothing to pay for and nothing to pay with. Radicals." He snorted. "Clothing salesmen is what you are. Radicals!"

I quit then. Not because I thought he was altogether correct but because at this point the words stood in our way. It all came back to a question of prices. He was wary of a passion for the rights of black men that wished, in the name of social justice, to make black into white and white into black. He was bitter that the bill for reparations was to be presented to those least able to afford it. They are still Marxists in their blood, these people. My uncle, for instance, although he is no longer a nattily dressed radical gambler but instead a man who is unemployed and worried and trying to accept the fact that mink is no longer selling and that, at sixty, the few jobs around are going to younger men who can sew mink faster, that the fur trade is dying, that the union—no longer an independent radical union but reduced to a local of the butchers' union—cannot even help him find work, and that he is going to be lucky merely to make ends meet in the future,

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my uncle said to me in a moment of extreme bitterness recently, "For Christ's sake, poor is poor! Can't you understand?"

Not only, then, have I not stuck to my own, I have not remained loyal to an older conception of the poor that had nothing to do with color and to an idea of socialism that insisted that the brotherhood was not of the skin but rather of the passion, that it united us in a quest for social justice. Which meant that the paying had to be done by those who had too much rather than by those who barely had enough for themselves. And here lies whatever the guilt is, not in the fact that I do not glorify or mythicize these people (the first would be difficult, the second impossible). To have been bought and sold so cheaply, to have accepted without resistance the super-salesmen who peddle me everything from pop art to *kitsch* socialism, to nod passively when the "real" enemy is identified as the middle-class housewife, notoriously Jewish, in Queens—there is guilt enough here. There is even enough guilt here to be understood by "radicals" who spin their summer passions out on the beaches of Fire Island while they squeeze the soul from those who are themselves confused and frightened and beginning to suspect (perhaps with good reason) that they are defenseless.

For such "radicals" distort beyond recognition the dream of socialist humanism, while they create of radicalism a new kind of intellectual fashionability to be sold to one another, like supermarket offbrands, for bargain prices. The radical as hustler, the radical "doing his thing"—the words, unfortunately, fit like a glove. Skin-tight. *We* professors, *we* journalists, *we* know that the white working class is indelibly reactionary, and *we* are united by our passion for equality and our eagerness to give away a patrimony that never belonged to us. For *we* have decided that poor is not poor unless skin is skin. How else can one explain a Left, a "new" Left, if you will, that cries for a world in which all flesh is equal but some flesh is more equal than other flesh.

The neighborhood is not yet a slum. It may never become one, although one suspects that its days are numbered. Nor is it a place where politics is taken as seriously as it once was. Even

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among the grandfathers of the revolution that never came who wait for death on the sidewalks of Mosholu Parkway, there is little talk of politics. History, we have been told, has many strange twists. Can anyone blame these old people if they do not understand life-style radicalism as what they had in mind when they launched their own struggles? When I talk to their grandchildren at City College, I frequently find myself thinking that they are right to have cashed in socialism for sun on a park bench. In any case, they do not believe that they have any choice.

For they have been forgotten—by their children, who betrayed them to begin with, by their grandchildren, who never bothered to ask who or what they were, by the Left, by New York, by time itself. Perhaps that last is the greatest of all betrayals, for when time robs you of your dignity then memory itself becomes treacherous. And they are now the enemy, inhabitants of the country of the faceless. They are not willing to pay the price because they insist that the fault is not theirs. And they insist, in however inarticulate a fashion, that we radicals look at ourselves as we really are, nothing extenuated. The guilt, they claim, is not theirs, although they are once again being made the scapegoats of a society unwilling to face up to the dictates of its fears or its conscience and pay from where the larder really is overstuffed.

"Give a damn!" one reads on the buses of New York. "It's still 1930 in the ghettos." This is real enough, despite one's knowledge that, to the man who wrote it, 1930 means *Bonnie and Clyde*, a dreamy technicolor landscape filmed through the haze. But it is not merely in the ghettos that 1930 is still alive. For 1930 is, as much as anything else, a particular consciousness of history. And we have forgotten how real 1930 is to people such as those in my neighborhood. For the neighborhood suffers from a sense of impending poverty, a feeling that the wind has once again shifted and that events are out of control, that time and power and calculation are rallying against them, that there is no one to listen to them, no one to speak for them, nothing against which they can protest. And so their world is to be forfeit, their reality to be surrendered, while they themselves will be cast aside, dry bones and dry souls, for one or another slogan that is simply a

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distortion of the truth they once viewed as elementary. Men suffer and men die. *All* men. No, they do not have to be told that it is still 1930 in the ghettos, for it has never been anything but 1930 in the neighborhood. They were not born to rule; they would settle now merely to be told that they were not born to suffer excessively either.

No place, apparently, has been reserved for them in the apocalyptic future. What they need is an Orwell whose honesty has thrust up from their own midst. What they have gotten are the barbs of swingers and the friendship of such as Mario Procaccino, and while the one may be a testimony to their virtue the other is an indication that fate, too, has settled for a quick laugh at their expense. "With friends like you," the old saying has it, "I don't need enemies."

But the truth remains, and the truth is that they are not the racists, not, at least, if that term has any meaning beyond that of being the most available pejorative whip for anyone in the radical circus eager to try his luck as ringmaster. For the rhetoric of radical and liberal righteousness is being created at their expense. They have been lashed by the tongues, minds and pens of their Fire Island betters—and they are now beginning to stiffen with the helpless self-defensive anguish of the victim suddenly accused of being a victimizer. And can those of us who have created our virtue at the expense of their reality escape the whispers that tell us that they, too, are suffering, that their terror and fear, like the terror and fear of the black dispossessed, are something against which, in our shame, we should protest? For my uncle is right. Poor is poor. And the brotherhood, ultimately, is not of the skin.

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Music Since Hiroshima: The Electronic Age Begins

HERBERT RUSSCOL

The moment man ceased to make music with his voice alone the art became machine-ridden. Orpheus's lyre was a machine, a symphony orchestra is a regular factory for making artificial sounds, and a piano is the most appalling contrivance of levers and wires this side of the steam engine.
—Jacques Barzun

The composer of electronic music flips a switch and programs the dimensions of a sound he has in mind: volume, timbre, duration, articulation. He faces a remarkably sophisticated machine, which can cost from $3,000 to $150,000, and can produce any acoustical event known to man. He flips another switch, and the machine obliges at once with the requested sound. If the composer, who is also part physicist and trained mathematician, is dissatisfied, he can reprogram. Or, he can alter, transfigure or refine the sound down to mathematically precise gradations. When he is pleased, he flips another switch and easily superimposes, or "patches," his one specific sound onto combinations of layers of other sounds, which he has fixed permanently on the storage medium of tape.

Eventually, after months of laborious splicing, the composer walks out of the studio with his new opus under his arm on a reel of tape. He has been in full control of his musical intentions to a degree undreamed of a generation ago. He knows exactly what his new piece is going to sound like, because he has been his own copyist, proofreader, publisher, conductor and orchestra; and his orchestra consists not of strings and winds, but of the entire spectrum of sound possibilities. What is more, he can dispatch his creation at once, to anywhere in the world, to anyone who cares to hear it, more easily than a painter crates a canvas.

This, in a nutshell, is what electronic music is all about. For the first time in history, composers work directly on the medium, on a material form, and can establish the fixed and final form of their music on a simple storage device, and without the expensive and usually unwilling aid of interpreters. This development has with good reason been termed the Revolt of the Composers; it brings to a close the 350-year-old epoch in which composers could only give approximate indications of their music on a manuscript, and then go hat in hand to search for performers who would turn the paper indications back into music. This is the most staggering breakthrough in the art of music since the invention of counterpoint, and may prove to be of more far-reaching significance. Whether or not it can produce a Bach or a Beethoven remains to be seen.

Running parallel with this revolution is

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another musical revolution, more difficult to grasp. The availability of electronic soundmaking machines has spurred the longing of composers to break out of the musical straitjacket—C Major scales, time signatures, tonality, violins, pianos, and everything else connected with what Western music lovers have regarded as almost divine laws of musical creation. For the last fifty years, the era dominated by Stravinsky and Schönberg, composers have sought new roads instead of the old well-trodden paths. Schönberg with his twelve-tone system of serial writing proposed a new grammar for music; it wouldn't do, a whole new language was urgently needed. As the English critic Peter Heyworth has pointed out, we now can view Stravinsky and Schönberg not as anarchists, but rather as men who tried desperately to hold the old order of music together somehow, to keep the mainstream of music flowing *somewhere*. But, "by postponing the break they inadvertently built up the pressure behind it."

That "pressure" was yearning for release from the ironclad traditional concept of what was acceptable musical sound. It was also a new, growing awareness that the art of music could encompass and control *the entire range of aural possibilities*. If a writer may use any word, or nonword, a painter draw any line or sign, why must a composer be constricted to narrow, arbitrary assumptions laid down centuries ago, of what are "acceptable" sounds that may be employed to make music? Is not a Bach fugue a novel, peculiar organization of sound? And who is to say what is an acceptable sound, anyhow? What about the intriguing, subtle sound discriminations of Eastern music?

There is no definition of music that forbids a composer from using the sound of a steam shovel, or of an electronic machine, if it so pleases him. You may agree with the description of music as "the art or science of arranging sounds in notes and rhythms to give a desired or pleasing pattern or effect," or you may care for the definition once given by the eighteenth-century Polish philosopher Hoene Wronski, who decided that *all* music was "the corporealization of the intelligence that is in sound." Neither puts electronic music out of bounds.

The composer of electronic music is indeed very much searching for "the intelligence that is in sound." He is an artistic primitive, and is feeling his way, groping for new ways and means of musical expression. Electronics has presented him with a God-given tool. The New Music (of which electronic music is one part, along with music for live players) accepts any sound, produced by any means, as valid raw material to be worked artistically. Often the new composer substitutes the beauty of mathematical order for "inspiration," and it is no coincidence that Boulez, Xenakis, Stockhausen and Babbitt, formidable names of the New Music, are all expert mathematicians.

Thus, it is our good fortune to be living in the midst of the twin revolution that rages today in music: the discovery of a material storage device for musical thought; and a tearing down of the old limits and rules of the game, and the substitution of an entirely new aesthetic that sets the limits of music at *whatever the human ear and human intelligence are able to perceive.*

The rupture in musical thinking that faces the contemporary composer, it is generally agreed, had its seeds in Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde,* and Debussy's *Afternoon of a Faun* and ballet *Jeux*. The quest for the broadening of *sound materials* began with the Italian musicians associated with the Futurist movements in painting, as early as 1910. Around this time, the composer-pianist Ferruccio Busoni wrote enthusiastically about a crude progenitor of today's synthesizers,* the Dynamophone. The twenties and the thirties saw such exotically named electrical contraptions as the Trautonium, Dynaphone and Theremin, among others, all of which passed on to the dustbin.

These early attempts were frustrated because the available sounds were limited, and because it is one thing to be able to

* A system of generators, modifiers and controllers that is designed to enable the construction of sounds in a general and logical way.

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make weird sounds on an electronic instrument, and an entirely different matter when you can get these sounds down permanently on tape, and shape them as you will into a new kind of music. But as early as 1922, Edgard Varèse, a composer whose influence on electronic music has been profound, wrote, "What we want is an instrument that will give us a continuous sound at any pitch. The composer and the electrician will have to labor together to get it." In 1937, John Cage, that Beckett clown and granddada of us all, stated prophetically what became the credo of the New Music: "The use of noise to make music will continue and increase until we reach a music produced through the aid of electrical instruments that will make available for musical purposes any and all sounds that can be heard."

Then the tape recorder came along, and in the late 1940s, the first "school" of tape music, *musique concrète,* was founded in Paris. Pierre Schaeffer and others achieved what was essentially a series of noise montages of naturally produced sounds gathered from traffic noises, birdcalls, foghorns, the human voice and whatever. These "junk-sounds" were altered on tape and artistically shaped into a structural unity.

At the same time, a group of musicians of the West German Radio at Cologne rejected the *musique concrète* idea of working with prerecorded sound, and experimented not in the *re*production of sounds by electronic means, but rather in the *production*. Accomplished theoreticians and acousticians, they set out to design electronic equipment that would drive a loudspeaker or magnetize a tape to produce any sound at all. They followed the basic theorem in acoustics that any tone consists of a combination of simple tones called "sine" or "sinusoidal" tones. These tones can be produced on a loudspeaker or a tape by an ordinary alternating current, and later combined as the programmer-composer desires on the remarkable invention, tape.

In America, the electronic age in music was casually ushered in on October 28, 1952, at New York's Museum of Modern Art, in a concert led by Leopold Stokowski. (The vision and restless interest of Stokowski in electronic developments in music have never been fully recognized, by the way—he can be seen today as a musical Marshall McLuhan.) The opening pieces of the concert required live performers; then after the intermission all instruments, chairs and stands were removed, and a large speaker mounted in a cabinet was placed in the center of the bare stage. The audience was left rather uneasily face-to-face with the speaker, which then electronically reproduced music made by Columbia University experimenters on a machine that produced electronic sound, and there went a 350-year-old tradition. Music and musicmaking would never be the same.

It is significant that the electronic era in music—a cultural period as distinct and all-encompassing as the Renaissance or the Baroque—coincides with the atomic age. The threat of thermonuclear holocaust, the dread reality of Us-It, drove artists to a new sensibility, and a search for a new tongue in which to utter the unutterable. The late forties and early fifties saw young composers everywhere seeking to discover and nourish new kinds of music that might express our transfigured world.

There was also a revulsion on the part of young musicians against staid concert halls and performers in white ties in a world that produced the Bomb. Red plush seats, white-maned conductors, and well-fed audiences waiting for a soothing musical massage: all the fixtures and symbols of the well-kept garden of music—you needed a confidence in Order and man's status to be part of that establishment. Little wonder that electronic music never sounds like a revelation of Faith; it is more likely to be creepy sounds and glissando yelps, and rather absurd.

I do not suggest that the Bomb fell and composers lined up to study voltage control and wave forms rather than harmony and counterpoint. Rather, Hiroshima is a convenient, dramatic date that marks the dying of one music, and the birth of another. The entire modern period in music, from 1900

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through Schönberg, was cast overnight into the past, and its violent arguments and theories made academic.

It is more than fortuitous that after 1945 young composers, especially the Germans, found themselves without a valid past and embarked upon radical innovation; that the Cologne studio was founded in 1950; that Boulez issued his famous rallying cry, *"Schönberg est mort!"* (Read: Anything goes) in 1952; that this period saw Cage's first experiments in random music, and also Babbitt's new concept of music, which would have bemused Johann Sebastian Bach, "totally organized" music of mathematical exactness.

The new composers were fascinated with modern physical theory. Many new musical terms were directly inspired by physics—composers spoke of "space-time relationships," as well as parameters, random choice, time fields, periodicity, formats and the like. Yannis Xenakis, a brilliant new composer, explained his *Pithoprakta* as "a confrontation of acoustical continuity and discontinuity . . . dense clouds of sound-atoms . . . the law of large numbers," and so on.

The Bomb, as the kids say in pop music, was a New Sound. If a composer of the atomic age was to express the sound of his time, he needed new tools, new language, new sounds.

Electronic music has been with us for a generation now, and it is interesting to take a close look at how the boys are doing. The boys are the new breed of musicotechnocrats who think in the new language of frequencies and oscillators and random generators. Not for them the old-fashioned, imprecise indications to an interpreter, crescendo and diminuendo; they speak of "attack and decay" of a tone, and control it themselves, thank you, on a synthesizer, and with exquisite precision.

Most of their writing is abstract, in the sense that paintings by Mondrian (controlled) or Pollock (random) are abstract. They are overwhelmed with the rank fecundity of the machine, to paraphrase Lewis Mumford. Just about every young composer in the world today (including Russia, where they seem to be quasi-underground) of any worth has accepted the principle of writing electronically as well as writing for live musicians. In America, quite possibly because American composers have always suffered an inferiority complex vis-a-vis the awesome European composers, and because Americans are born tinkerers, young composers have plunged into electronic writing like happy ducks. New, smaller, easily operated machines, of which the Moog Synthesizer of "Switched-On Bach" record fame is the most successful, sell for a few thousand dollars. Colleges and universities all over America have ordered their Moogs, which will soon be as universal and taken-for-granted a campus fixture as the chapel organ. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of eager would-be composers can hardly wait to get started on the Moog, and it is certain that in the next five or ten years we are going to be deluged with more and more electronic music.

In the scathing words of the liveliest music critic of our time, the octogenarian Igor Stravinsky, "Electronic music . . . has moved into and conquered academe. The young musician takes his degree in computer technology now, and settles down with his Moog or his mini-synthesizer as routinely as in my day he would have taken it in counterpoint or harmony (see dictionary) and gone to work at the piano."

Nevertheless, the availability of synthesizers will bring about a profound change in how we learn about music, and what we regard as valid sound materials for the art of music. At the new University of California San Diego campus at La Jolla, the music department teaches music appreciation not with records and diagrams of music history, but with tape recorders and synthesizers, and students learn both the performing and creating of music as a basic element of the arts curriculum.

One fascinating aspect of electronic music is that it has been enthusiastically welcomed by young audiences. This is astonishing. Ours has been the first era that hates to hear new music; for us, music is an evasion of life, and almost all of us want to close the gates and be curators.

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But the kids have embraced electronic music, along with rock, as their very own. They reject serious jazz as "adult music"—which may dismay over-thirties who once excitedly went to hear Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington as the very essence of bold youthful music—but they buy recordings of electronic music by the armload. "Switched-On Bach," an unnerving reconstruction of Bach on a Moog, soared right up there on the best-seller record charts.

James Kunen, the young author of *The Strawberry Statement,* is quoted as saying, "I don't read much, it's easier to go to a movie, and let it all wash over you." With the same philosophy, the most exciting place to hear new music in New York these days is not at Lincoln Center, where electronic music is rarely heard (the kids often despise Lincoln Center, as the symbol of all that's wrong with the musical establishment), but at such unlikely places as the Electric Ear concerts at the Electric Circus, and at the Free Music Store, both in the middle of hippieland. Music is not treated here like a Ming vase under a glass bell. There are no ushers, no dressing up, no chairs. You sit on the floor or walk around and smoke, and let it all wash over you, and I for one am a fervent convert.

The kids have new ears. They are children of the unblinking electronic eye; in Susan Sontag's terms, they are cool, emotionally neutral, free from prejudice as to what music should sound like, and utterly lack cultural suppositions. They have been flipping TV channels since childhood, and exposed to a fantastic sound spectrum of folk, classical, pop, rock and commercials; their nervous systems are extended to receive messages from every corner of Mr. McLuhan's global village, and they groove with electronic music, the true voice of our "technotronic" age.

Of course, the ready acceptance of electronic music by young audiences does not mean it is good music. On the contrary, one cannot avoid the suspicion that so many composers turned on because their music written in the conventional medium was god-awful. For them, electronic music is nothing but a cop-out, because they shrink from battling it out with Stravinsky, and the ghostly competition of the old masters.

Is this controlled chaos, these "wild clumps of jagged sound, blips, squeals," "tonal ruptures and utter boredom," "this aural nightmare," in the words of a host of outraged critics, really here to stay? It seems that the answer is emphatically yes. We emotionally refuse to believe it, especially the music lover who adores Mozart and has just made his peace with Bartok. But the aural nightmare is upon us, along with the Bomb, and just won't go away.

It is clear that we have entered the postmodern period in music. We cannot unring bells. Rather wistfully, we realize now that all the passionate arguments about Hindemith, Bartok, Schönberg, Stravinsky *et al.* are now passé. The question that really haunts music today is whether the "electronic postmodern period" is just that, or whether it marks the end of the entire epoch of what we know as serious music.

Walter Sear, a composer who has written striking electronic music, as well as old-fashioned hand-model symphonies, regards the synthesizer merely as a fascinating new instrument—much as the new pianoforte, after the old harpsichord, fascinated Mozart and Beethoven. On the other hand, prophets are not lacking who cannot accept electronic music as part of the orderly flow of the mainstream of music, as we see Brahms as the successor to Beethoven, and Richard Strauss as the inheritor of Wagner. These prophets are convinced that the end has come.

I believe that it is too early to announce that the entire epoch has been brought to a close. Electronic writing may veer off through the mixed media phenomenon and become the basis of a new art form altogether. Already in the postmodern period, creative art is bristling with an undisciplined intermingling of disciplines.

It is the beginning of a beginning. We shall have to give up most of our cherished notions as to what is off limits in music, open our ears, and learn to live, however unwillingly, with the New Music. But after all, music lovers have been complaining about *ars nova* since the fourteenth century.

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Duplex

CARL BODE

Not much of a war hero but enough,
Barely enough,
To get me buried, free, at
Arlington,
Plus a part-fee for the undertaker
And a folded American
Flag.

All mine if I crave it
And I do.
And later on—did you know this?—
My wife can be buried there too
Free.

And yet there is one small
Hitch, or maybe it isn't. But
Anyway—I didn't know this myself—
What they do at Arlington and
The other veterans' cemeteries is
When your wife dies
Dig open your own grave down to the
Coffin,
Put hers on top of it,
And then fill up the grave again.

My wife and I have been closer than
Most married pairs . . .
I shun all metaphysics,
All metaphors,
And only ask,
Why does the thought shake my bones?

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Hitchcock

CHARLES THOMAS SAMUELS

Although Alfred Hitchcock is the most primitive of major directors, he belongs in their company. Those who emphasize his primitivism also dismiss his achievement, but his achievement is fundamental to the art of cinema—more specifically, to the art of using cinematic means for audience manipulation.

It is not, however, fundamental to anything else; a truth that needs reestablishing because recent critics have misrepresented Hitchcock. Contrary to their view, he is not seriously interested in moral problems, as one can learn from *I Confess* (1953), a pertinent test case, since it treats explicitly those themes most reverently attributed to the Master: transfer of guilt, the need for absolution, *et cetera*. About a Canadian priest who receives a murderer in confession and thus cannot reveal the crime even when he is himself falsely accused, *I Confess* begins with a moral dilemma. But whereas a serious artist would use the thriller situation to intensify the moral dilemma, Hitchcock does the reverse.

This we can trace in his development of the villain: a refugee from a concentration camp, driven to robbery because his wife is dying from overwork and driven to murder by a reflex of fear. Such mitigating circumstances seem designed to reenforce the priest's sacramental vow of silence; but since Hitchcock is interested only in suspense (will the priest confess?) and melodrama (the priest is good and the murderer isn't), he gradually effaces all moral bonds between the protagonists by transforming the refugee into a sadist who torments his savior with periodic charges of betrayal. Eventually, the man is even made to kill his beloved wife, thus neutralizing the priest's obligations in the interest of a powerful conclusion for the plot.

Throughout his career, Hitchcock has posed moral problems only to evade them. In *Blackmail* (1929) and *Sabotage* (1936), for example, Hitchcock allows guilty heroines to go unpunished simply because their confessions are accidentally interrupted. In *Spellbound* (1945) and *Marnie* (1964) he depicts people falling in love with neurotics and has the queerer member of each couple draw explicit attention to the anomaly. Hitchcock was so titillated by the subject that he intended, in the later film, to have the hero rape the heroine just as she was stealing cash from his safe, but he confessed to Truffaut that fear of censorship made him abstain. Obviously, no moralist could have conceived this scene, much less have avoided it for that reason.

Indeed, how could Hitchcock be a moralist when he does not reproduce the complexity of real experience? If he veers in the direction of realism, as in *The Wrong Man* (1957), he must first appear to his audience announcing that this true story is really stranger than fiction and must do so while standing in a V of light that magically leaves his own figure enshrouded—duplicating the cartoon printed throughout the credits of *The Lodger* (1926), his first typical shock fantasy.

Most of Hitchcock's ideas about the real world are indistinguishable from the com-

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monest pieties—which, of course, helps to explain his unique popular appeal. To begin with, he is discomforted by intellectuals, as we see from *Spellbound,* for which Hitchcock solemnly employed a psychiatric adviser, although the film repeatedly intimates that pyschiatrists are just as nutty as laymen. In that film the eminent doctor, who befriends Ingrid Bergman and Gregory Peck, tells us that he was so jealous of Peck's presumed victim that he once disrupted the man's lecture by kicking over chairs. Later, when he begins probing Peck's id for clues to solve the murder ("I'm going to be your father image . . . It's a shortcut, but we haven't got much time . . ."), he sagely pleads, as Peck balks at the nature of these revelations, "Try to recall the details. The more cockeyed the better for the scientific side of it." In *Rope* (1948), a gratuitous murder is attributed to Nietzsche, and the discovery of this link inspires a passionate denunciation, by James Stewart, of intellectuals who don't understand the unique worth of every human soul.

During World War II, Hitchcock became a super-flag-waver, dedicating *Foreign Correspondent* (1940) to those "recording angels" who first saw that Europe would erupt, and ending his irresponsible little thriller with the National Anthem. In 1957, he followed the vogue of *cinéma vérité* and even seemed to discover a theme in *The Wrong Man*'s detailed portrayal of the vagaries of law enforcement. But, at the film's conclusion, its hero indicts not society, which cruelly misjudged him, but the actual culprit, who presumably caused all the trouble by not turning himself in.

My previous remarks only suggest the lack of significant meaning that makes some critics dismiss Hitchcock as a mere prestidigitator or mechanic. But, in the narrow sense, he is an indifferent technician, and no magician who coaxes rabbits so rarely from his hat deserves the title. Everyone knows that setting is crucial to Hitchcock's effects, but no first-rate director, accustomed to big budgets, is so indifferent to authentic locations, so lavish in his use of filmed backdrops or stock shots (that is, bits cribbed from the studio library). Hitchcock boasts about his careful repositioning of fake clouds to signal the passage of time in successive scenes of *Rope,* but he does not remark that in any single shot the clouds remain firmly fixed, revealed to the most imperceptive as celestial cotton candy. Careless use of painted sets is a Hitchcock trademark. Recall, for instance, the last scene of *Vertigo* in which Kim Novak must actually jump from a tower, whereas she had previously only pretended. Considering the malarkey characteristic of the plot, there should at least be visual authenticity in the climax, but Hitchcock shoots the last sequence against a studio set, although the earlier scene had been photographed on location.

In first-rate entertainments like *The Lady Vanishes,* Hitchcock makes nationality functional to his plot. In more ambitious films, where accuracy is requisite to belief, he is oddly casual. Thus we get Montgomery Clift (in *I Confess*) as a French-Canadian priest adenoidally American in a house full of foreign accents or Gregory Peck (in *The Paradine Case*), Her Majesty's most gifted barrister with a down-east twang.

Film buffs rhapsodize about Hitchcock's trick photography, and one remembers marvels even from dreadful films—like the famous staircase shot in *Vertigo.* But frequently the tricks represent not skill but underhandedness. The shower murder in *Psycho,* for example, has the "mother" enter a dazzlingly lighted bathroom, but we can't make out "her" features because they are in the dark.

Often when Hitchcock does devise a clever trick, he uninventively repeats it. I refer not only to bits of business (cutting from a human voice to a train or boat whistle, as in *The 39 Steps* and *Foreign Correspondent*), or replanted clues (Marnie's neurosis: a fear of red; Gregory Peck's in *Spellbound:* a fear of parallel lines), or Hitchcock arcana: blonde heroines, mistaken identities, simultaneous pursuits by villains and cops. I would also point to repetition in incongruous contexts. Thus when Joan Fontaine's cruel employer in *Rebecca* squashes her cigarette into a jar of cold cream, we applaud so striking a way to make us hate her,

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but we are not meant to hate Jessie Royce Landis, the charming mother in *To Catch a Thief,* who squashes her cigarette into the yolk of an egg. In Hitchcock, an overhead shot is invariably used to suggest menace, and changes in locale are regularly signaled by shots of a facade, usually in tilt. Conventional editing techniques, like those dictating progressive movement in group scenes from long, to medium, to close shots occur more often in Hitchcock than accords with his reputation for unusual camerawork, and no other prominent director makes such lazy use of artificial dissolves.

Because Hitchcock commits so many errors and produces so many films that don't excite, he can't be credited with automatic expertise. The difficulty of achieving his special excellence is perhaps the best proof that it is an achievement.

Occasionally in all of his films and always in the best of them, Hitchcock is the master of evocation. Intellectual emptiness and spurious realism are preconditions for his effects. Since Hitchcock depicts a world in which anything can happen, and therefore everything is a threat, distinctions and priorities are forbidden.

Like Poe, the writer he most resembles, Hitchcock is obsessed by a small stock of situations which we can mistake for themes; but, as in Poe's case, these "themes" are only emotional stimuli born from the primitive stage of indiscriminate terror. Both men are sensationalists, but Hitchcock has the advantage of working in a medium that thrives on sensations which it can transmit with irresistible completeness. Sometimes Poe appears to be unveiling a metaphysical terror behind a physical threat, but since words can only point, and since Poe wielded one of the clumsiest pointers in English literature, he had to fall back on insinuation, validated by an aesthetic that argued for vagueness. Hitchcock's vocabulary is the very world from which he wants us to shrink, its items an inexhaustible stock of palpable terrors.

Yet Hitchcock never merely exhibits the sources of dread. As countless horror films and Hitchcock imitations prove, the naked ugliness is likely to excite only laughter. Not by accident do Hitchcock's excursions into direct brutality—*Psycho* and *The Birds* —contain his most elaborate contrivances, his most artful examples of aesthetic distance.

The secret of Hitchcock's terror lies not in the objects he employs but in the timing with which he presents them. He understands, as Poe understood, that emotion, which is imperious when it peaks, cannot be long sustained but may be extended through counterpoint. Like other romantics harassed by the essentially cognitive nature of language, Poe always yearned to transform himself into a musician—which, with a tin ear, he eventually became. For Hitchcock, no such transformation is required, since inherent resemblances between music and film have only to be exploited. Because a film is made from individual shots, the length of which is determined by editing, the filmmaker can control the speed of his revelation to a degree imperfectly approximated by the stage, with its cumbersome machinery, and unavailable to the writer (even the poet) who remains in thrall to the reader's attention span and rhythmic exactness. Therefore, by choosing precisely what we may see and hear at any given moment, by altering the amount of information and by varying the tempo at which it is conveyed, Hitchcock can play upon each spectator's emotions in much the same way that a piece of music plays upon his hands and feet.

Admiring interviewers seeking to pluck out the secret of Hitchcock's meaning forget that the secret is the absence of meaning, the absolute identification of meaning with effect. Thus Hitchcock asserted to Ian Cameron and V. F. Perkins (in *Movie,* January, 1963), "I'm more interested in the technique of story telling by means of film rather than in what the film contains." And when his interlocutors touched upon a question that Hitchcock was normally happy to emphasize—box office receipts of, in this case, *Psycho*—the director pressed on with his shrewd self-analysis: "[The money] was a secondary consideration. *Psycho* is probably one of the most cinematic films I've

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made and there you get a clear example of the use of film to cause an audience to respond emotionally."

Interviewers: It was primarily an emotional response you were after from your audience?
Hitchcock: Entirely. That's the whole device. After all, the showing of a violent murder at the beginning was intended purely to instill into the minds of the audience a certain degree of fear of what is to come. Actually in the film, as it goes on, there's less and less violence because it had been transferred to the minds of the audience.

The key to *Psycho* is less Sigmund Freud than Richard Strauss. That is why most of Hitchcock's best films are devoid of meaning, peopled by mere containers of stress, and set against backgrounds chosen simply because their innocuousness counterpoints terror. Primitive in insight, Hitchcock is a sophisticated man revelling in pure form, whose films are ends in themselves and so can please both the plebes who want thrills and the cognoscenti thrilled by such an arrogant display of craftsmanship. That is why, like music, Hitchcock films are always most striking at the beginning and the end (introduction and coda), and why he sustains interest only when there are enough crescendos to provide rhythm, paralyzing reason and achieving kinesthesia.

The 39 Steps, Hitchcock's first masterpiece (1935), exhibits his technique in its simplest form. Consider the first sequence showing Robert Donat entering a vaudeville pub where he enjoys the performance until it is interrupted by a shot. We divine no reason for Donat's presence and the pub itself seems utterly insignificant, yet Hitchcock's editing creates a rhythm of anticipation that makes the gunshot doubly effective. First he pans across the music hall sign as it is being illuminated (other directors simply start their films; Hitchcock emphatically begins them). Then, in a tilt shot that declares some approaching mishap, we see a man's back as he nears the box office. Increasing our curiosity, Hitchcock shoots his entrance at floor level, raising the camera only when Donat sits, but still not affording a frontal view. Immediately, the band strikes up, distracting our attention in a way that is obtrusive and therefore frustrating. He now cuts to a full view of the stage taken from the back of the theater, and from this to a close-up of the stage itself on which the mind reader is being introduced. Pans across the audience, in which Donat is casually revealed, and cuts between it and the stage, pile up new information and raise new questions (who is Donat? why is he here? what is his relationship to the mind reader? *et cetera*) with a speed that nearly defies formulation. The cutting and panning tempo now accelerates (that is, we get shorter and shorter bits of film alternately devoted to stage and audience), a movement augmented by the sudden exchange of questions and answers. Donat asks about the distance from Winnipeg to Montreal (whatever for? we wonder), someone challenges the mind reader's response, a fight breaks out in the hall, and Hitchcock further increases the editing speed. Suddenly we get a close-up of the gun; after a moment sufficient to inspire our surprise, it goes off. Then the frame fills with a mass of bodies seeking exit. Donat is pushed against a foreign woman; they talk, leave the hall, get a bus. Fade-out.

By showing the audience that the unexpected can occur, this scene builds up anticipation that will keep us tense even at moments that are relatively placid. This pattern of tension and relaxation, not the silly spy story, is what *The 39 Steps* is "about." The film's next brilliant sequence moves from the primitive fear of the unexpected to the somewhat more sophisticated fear of false appearances. Having witnessed the death of his mysterious guest, after she had told him about the 39 steps and the archdeceiver with the missing finger, Donat seeks refuge from the police, at a farmhouse near the residence of a man he believes will epitomize "the right side." At first, the farmer rejects Donat's plea for shelter, but he relents at the hero's offer to pay. When he thinks Donat has begun making love to his wife, however, he determines to take vengeance. This he does by informing the police of the fugitive's whereabouts, but not before the wife has informed Donat that a police van has arrived.

Beginning with a close-up of the wife's

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face after Donat flees, the sequence then dissolves into the sweating face of a policeman in the same position: protection is literally replaced by jeopardy. Immediately, Hitchcock cuts to long shots of the pursuit across the moor, intercut with close-ups of solitary policemen silhouetted against the sky—an alteration suggesting that Donat will come through. Still, the police outnumber him and he has no place to hide. Excited by pulsating music and Hitchcock's use of fast motion photography, we are desperate for Donat to gain admission when he finally arrives at the house of the "key man." Donat being let in by the maid is immediately replaced by the policemen being turned away by her saucy lies. Relieved at the ease of this getaway, we settle down as Donat enters a highly civilized drawing room, presided over by suave Godfrey Tearle. The houseguests turn out to include a sheriff, but this reminder of pursuit is cleverly evaded, as Tearle draws our hero to the window, through which we spy the police running in the opposite direction. The guests exit, Hitchcock moves in for a closer shot, and we are now back in a confined haven, very much like that of the farm. The relaxed Donat tells about his adventures, while the camera keeps Tearle in sharp focus and Donat in soft. At the end of his recital, Tearle holds up, for the camera's inspection, a hand missing one finger.

This *coup de théâtre* is effective because of Hitchcock's editing. The coincident use of close-ups and relatively slow pacing at the farmhouse and the mansion make them both valleys of rest below Donat's hill of effort. Moreover, Hitchcock controls the image size so as to emphasize the contrasting coziness of the farm and house scenes with the wide-open threat of the moor. For these reasons and others (like the splendid performances of Donat and Tearle, and of Wendy Hiller as the farmer's wife), the climax of the sequence is made tremendously powerful. Characteristically, the pace slackens immediately thereafter, as Tearle regretfully discusses his need to kill Donat, which creates an even greater shock when he does so--until the next scene. The film's suspenseful rhythm is subsequently reinforced when Donat is joined in his ordeal by a woman, thus doubling the audience's apprehension, while also providing an opportunity for a different kind of suspense as the strangers are handcuffed to each other: will his bravery overcome her reluctance?

To this combination of exciting rhythm and speedy plotting, Hitchcock adds in his next major film a new kind of comedy rooted in national caricature, Hitchcock's only viable, because swift, means of creating people. Based on the famous story of a girl who can find no trace of her hotel companion on returning to their room, *The Lady Vanishes* (1938) features the shock of losing confidence in one's perception. Throughout the film, as Margaret Lockwood searches for Dame May Whitty (an incongruously mild-mannered spy of whose presence all signs have been erased), she encounters little help from her compatriots, who all have selfish reasons for denying that they saw the woman. Thus, for the British audience for which the film was made, national self-confidence is affronted in a way that parallels the affront to the heroine.

Pursued by the villains, Lockwood and Michael Redgrave turn to their British trainmates who, since it is teatime, must be massed in the dining car. This the villains have uncoupled and surrounded, but the occupants won't, at first, believe that they are in danger ("They won't do anything," one announces. "We're British subjects"); and when an emissary sent to entice them from the train reveals he went to Oxford, the poor dupes almost follow him. Only after a shot rings out do they acknowledge their error, rally round the protagonists, and simultaneously thrill the audience with affirmation of Miss Whitty's existence and of British grit.

Like *The 39 Steps, The Lady Vanishes* offers a nonstop display of Hitchcock's speedy, evocative construction. But this film is even more brilliant in its reliance on visual details to create desired effects. Shortly after the first scene, for example, as they prepare to board the train, Margaret Lockwood is hit on the head by a falling window box intended for Dame May. Immediately, Hitchcock cuts to a subjective camera shot

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of blurred vision, further representing Lockwood's vertigo by superimposing a train wheel. The speedy progress of surrounding experience is then established by close-up shots of tracks as they merge and separate before the onrushing train. Then, from an objective shot of the compartment with Miss Lockwood waking up, Hitchcock again cuts to a subjective shot, as the heroine's "eyes" pick up Dame May, a smiling man, a veiled woman peering at her, and, at her side, a mother and daughter. A bit later she returns to the compartment and prepares for sleep. Quickly cutting to the famous shot of the train as it crosses a graceful but narrow and enormously high viaduct, Hitchcock visually implies the dangerous vulnerability of the heroine's position, which she does not yet understand. So Miss Lockwood closes her eyes once more, after panning across the compartment where the man is playing with the little girl, Dame May is humming, and all seems safe.

This shot fades, we again see the train laterally, and again move to tracks merging and separating in their measurement of time. Abruptly there is a frontal shot of the train as it effectively runs us over, a whistle shrilly blares, and Miss Lockwood wakes up, glancing about the compartment in a direction opposite to the one used before and coming to rest on an empty seat. This skillful use of visualized time and parallel subjective shots creates for the audience the heroine's terrifying sense of having lost her grip on reality and thus involves us emotionally despite the blatant preposterousness of the plot.

While sacrificing the tightness of these early films—each photographed in a studio—*North by Northwest* (1959) contains the boldest display of Hitchcock's mastery of emotional rhythm. Critics faulting this extravaganza as self-parody misjudge the seriousness of its models. *The 39 Steps* and, more obviously, *The Lady Vanishes* are exercises in the terror of confinement; *North by Northwest* is Hitchcock's bravura answer to the question: how can you scare people in technicolor and a Vista-Vision screen? For this reason, the plot of the film is rooted in topography: the true star of *North by Northwest* is the United States map.

Therefore, Hitchcock's signatory appearance in this film is the most functional of his career. Materializing in the crowd of people as the credits are ending, Hitchcock reaches a bus that slams its door in his face just as we read "Directed by . . ." Like his creator, the hero of the film is a man with less than expected control over his environment.

At first, Cary Grant seems fully in charge, weaving through the crowd while dictating orders to his secretary that will simultaneously placate his girl friend and his mother, and climaxing his display of cool by commandeering a taxi—emblem of power throughout the New York scenes. Whizzing into the Plaza where he is greeted as a steady client, Grant seems on top of his world, which he is—until some thugs mistake him for someone else. From then on he becomes someone else—a man senselessly hounded through areas of differing dimensions.

North by Northwest is simultaneously humorous and frightening—not alternately one or the other like *The Lady Vanishes* and *The 39 Steps*—because it lets the viewer in on the joke of its sheer contrivance. We get the bravura idea near the beginning of the film through a scene with Grant drunkenly careening down a narrow road in a car, since we all know that this is a standard movie conclusion. This scene is, moreover, a model of shifting tempi to enhance a mood and of the centrality of landscape, for the horror of Grant's experience is equivalent to the narrowness of the road and the proximity of the sea at its side, a vision that comically sobers him enough to renew his self-control. Subsequently, he is trapped with his pursuers in an elevator from which he is literally saved by humor: the laughter his mother excites, providing cover for his escape. Menace in tight quarters reaches its climax in the film when Grant visits the United Nations, citadel of civilized safety, only to see a man stabbed in the back.

Henceforth, menace moves outdoors (with the single exception of the auction room scene, borrowed from *The 39 Steps*, needed to further the romance, borrowed from *Notorious*). Of the two set-pieces of outdoor

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menace, the crop-dusting sequence is the more adroit, making full use of the possibilities offered Hitchcock by his medium.

Sent to a rural bus stop, Grant finds himself on a wide open road, which Hitchcock emphasizes with aerial shots. Lack of music and the long-held emptiness of the setting also create a feeling that something tremendous is coming in a film so normally galvanic. Brilliantly, Hitchcock builds suspense by exaggerating the eventlessness of the scene. For some time, Grant merely peers up and down the road; the rare car that crosses moves on without stopping. When a truck comes through, Grant is rewarded only by a mouthful of dust. Soon, however, another car appears from a side road, depositing a man. Now we get a long shot of two figures at opposite sides of an immense vista. Something must surely be up! After a moment of hesitation, Grant crosses the road, an action Hitchcock shoots subjectively, thus heightening our expectation, because subjective shots invariably provide dramatic emphasis. Then exquisitely laconic dialogue assures us that this man cannot be the threat we have feared. A bus now draws up and the man mounts its steps, but not before remarking, "Funny about that plane. Crop-dusting where there ain't no crops."

Having thrown us off so long and so completely, Hitchcock now explodes the violence, hurling Grant across the wide expanse, in which there is no cover, before the swooping, gunfiring plane. Suddenly, Grant notices a cornpatch and makes a run for it; the camera closes in on his triumphant face. But he (we) had forgotten: the plane is equipped with poison gas. How can Grant get away? Running into the road, he stops a truck, but almost at the cost of his life. The marauding airplane, however, can't brake as easily as the truck into which it crashes, as we crash into laughter at the delicious coincidence. Artistically, Hitchcock ends the sequence with a wide-screen intersected by a forward motion of perpendiculars (people moving toward the debris) through which Grant moves backwards in the opposite direction. But this too dissolves in laughter, when we dissolve into the hayseeds' truck, which Grant expropriated for his getaway, parked on a posh Chicago street, to the obvious consternation of the traffic cops.

North by Northwest is a prime example of contentless virtuosity. It is also notable for showing, with peculiar clarity, the function of Hitchcock's cynicism. Matching his display that no object is innocent is his belief that no person is. The ubiquity of guilt and of corruption in Hitchcock's world, however, contrary to the view of solemn critics, are rarely moral observations but usually emotional cues. Since no one is very good in the typical Hitchcock movie, we needn't take sides and can root for naked skill. This, in turn, concentrates our feelings on action, which is what the director wants. "Audiences are strange," he has asserted. "I know their reactions so well I don't have to go to the theater anymore; the emotional anxieties are pretty well standard. And they do not necessarily relate to right and wrong." As evidence of this proposition, Hitchcock repeatedly cites the scene from *Psycho* where Tony Perkins is trying to submerge a car containing the woman he has just killed. Hitchcock maintains that spectators root for it to sink, and they do: because the victim has been revealed as a thief and fornicator and because the action is irresistible in its appeal (the car almost sinks, stops, causes Perkins a moment of panic, and then goes to the bottom, bringing him and us relief).

In *North by Northwest* the release of the spectator from moral considerations is patterned every bit as carefully as the release of Cary Grant from his sources of control. First, we have the flaming-haired bridge-playing mother whom her son can bribe. Then we have venality on the train: when Grant escapes by stealing a porter's clothes we applaud his cleverness, until the camera cuts to the "victim" in underwear counting his cash. Even later when anxiety seems the only desired response, Hitchcock provides a tiny moral shock: when Cary Grant escapes from a hospital room by invading that of another patient, she screams until putting on her glasses, at which point she begs him to remain.

Morality is more seriously neutralized in the film through Hitchcock's characteriza-

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tion of the ostensible "good guys," who not only risk Grant's life but do so with outrageous callousness. Upon being informed that Grant must play decoy in the fight against foreign agents, a nice-old-lady C.I.A. officer sighs, "Good-bye, Mr. [Grant], wherever you are," and Leo G. Carroll, our head man, hatches the plot while photographed against the Capitol. The crucial contribution made by such cynicism can be quickly perceived by comparing *North by Northwest* to *Foreign Correspondent,* a film nearly identical in plot that is washed out by patriotic sentimentality.

Hitchcock's cynicism makes an advantage of his moral indifference by freeing him and his audience to admire pure aggression, including the aggression of film form. But his fear that nothing is what it seems (of which the skepticism about moral distinctions is only one consequence) sometimes approaches the status of serious belief, and then we see, most dramatically, the special underpinnings of his work.

Shadow of a Doubt (1943), often described by Hitchcock as his favorite film, culminates notions that can be traced back to *The Lodger* (1926). That silent movie is one of Hitchcock's many teasing thrillers (like *Stage Fright* and *Vertigo*) in which the audience is crudely misled about a character's guilt, in this case a man who is suspected of being Jack the Ripper. Surrounding the silly puzzle are scenes of real interest that establish the moral inferiority to the presumed criminal of more respectable members of his society. The opening sequence, which is astonishingly fluent for the period, emphasizes the public's prurient interest in crime, and the closing sequence, although a bit florid, makes the public seem reprehensible in its vengefulness (a characteristic emphasized, here as elsewhere, by the scapegoat's innocence).

Unlike the hero of *The Lodger,* Uncle Charlie, in *Shadow of a Doubt,* is guilty of crimes attributed to him; but he is given idealistic, if cracked, motives in Hitchcock's evident desire to create an approximate—and highly ironic—moral parity between Uncle Charlie and the innocent niece who is his alter ego. Although she had longed for him to relieve the dullness of her middle-class life, she instantly determines to banish him after discovering his crime. This discomforts us not only because her professed love should at least make her consider protecting him, but because her motives for wishing him gone are hardly edifying: she fears that his presence will compromise her father's job at the bank and will disillusion her doting mother.

Throughout the film, Hitchcock pokes holes into the facade of respectability that he was initially careful to erect. When Uncle Charlie visits his brother-in-law at the bank, for example, and makes a joke about embezzlement, the brother-in-law cautions against such humor in such a place. Shortly after, when Charlie is introduced to a rich widow (his preferred class of victim), she reacts rather more libidinously than accords with her mourning. One of the family's best friends plots murders for his pastime, and the father enthusiastically joins in. Innocent small-town life involves a yearning for forbidden thrills, a point Charlie makes explicit in a cafe scene before the climax. When he is killed by his niece in self-defense, the thematic substructure of their relationship is perfectly externalized in action. In her attempt to preserve cherished insulation from a more mordant perspective on life, she turns lethal.

Shadow of a Doubt is erratically written (its collaborators running from Sally Benson to Thornton Wilder), but it almost succeeds in making a serious comment. Thus we get the first important example in Hitchcock of visual symbolism: in identical shots that introduce the protagonists in identical poses after setting has established the dramatic difference between their worlds. But Hitchcock ruins this subtle equation, not only through blatant details in the script (uncle and niece share first names and telepathic powers), but by his final submission to conventions of melodrama. Since these necessitate someone to root for, Hitchcock must ultimately dissolve the equation whose irony sustains the film. In totally amoral movies like *North by Northwest* rooting for the hero implies no disruptive judgment; in *Shadow of a Doubt* it is profoundly illogical.

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Nevertheless, *Shadow of a Doubt* helps us measure the extent to which Hitchcock's art is based on his assumption that normality is merely a thin veneer covering a lust for thrills. Like the niece, we tolerate thrills just until they threaten permanently to taint our self-image, so Hitchcock obligingly neutralizes the threat with last-minute melodrama. But his concern for us is specious, only a reflection of his concern for the box office. (". . . I have too much conscience," he once said, "to make a film that would please only me and the critics.") Only our money commands his respect and nothing so validates his contempt for the rest of us as our willingness to pay for manipulation. Hitchcock's sensitivity to audience tolerance alone restrains his contempt; when that tolerance loosens, he makes *Psycho* and *The Birds*.

In the best of his films, however, contempt for respectable pretension is reflected, more fully than in *Shadow of a Doubt*, in the plot as well as in Hitchcock's formal aggression. Thus *Strangers on a Train* (1951) almost succeeds in joining Hitchcock's mastery of emotional rhythm to the other qualities that we associate with narrative art.

Made in 1951 after four straight flops, from a novel Hitchcock discovered for himself, *Strangers on a Train* is a happy instance of an impulse suddenly finding its proper form. Throughout his work, Hitchcock had used, strictly for emotive purposes, the device of one character's being accused of another's crime. Patricia Highsmith's novel, while itself a pretentious, even brazen affair, has the virtue of making this device accord perfectly with Hitchcock's most fundamental attitude: that everyone is latently a killer. In this film, the victim of false accusation is, in a sense, morally guilty. What is only hinted at in the niece of Uncle Charlie is explicitly and carefully developed in Guy Haines.

In the film, as in the novel, Haines is a rather unformed young man who learns of his homicidal impulses by meeting Bruno Anthony accidentally on a train. Bruno, who hates his father, offers to murder Guy's wife (a woman of little virtue) so that Guy can remarry, if Guy will react in kind. Normal restraints make Guy refuse Bruno's offer, but we see that it has definite appeal. Seeing this too, Bruno follows the wife to an amusement park and strangles her. Then, when Guy balks at fulfilling his part of the "bargain," Bruno strikes back.

Hitchcock's interest in this plot is suggested by the few changes he makes in its initial details. First, he turns Guy from an aspiring architect into a famous athlete and thus from a genuine talent blocked by an unsuitable spouse into a tennis bum coveting a patrician Senator's daughter (transformed from the novel's interior decorator to clarify the shadiness of Haines's motives). Then he shifts the setting to Washington, from which he draws ironic contrasts between civilization and the baser impulses, as in the wonderful shot of a dark-suited Bruno standing before an august white pillar of the Jefferson Memorial.

Further evidence of the story's appeal are the visual analogies to which it inspired Hitchcock. Appropriately, the film begins by equating its protagonists, since the first shots are of taxis drawing up to a railroad station and depositing two sets of feet that don't possess bodies until they bump against each other in the dining car. Then, throughout the reverse shots of Bruno and Guy in conversation, Bruno's face is barred with shadows cast by some venetian blinds while Guy's appears in white light. This contrast is exploited later in the film, after Bruno has murdered Guy's wife, when he is waiting across the street from his beneficiary's apartment. Bruno stands behind a metal gate, suggesting the expected consequence of crime, but he is composed and regularly photographed, whereas the agitated Guy soon appears in tilt. Heeding Bruno's call, Guy crosses, but, during the ensuing conversation about Bruno's father, Guy addresses him while standing clear of the gate. When some police unexpectedly arrive, Guy is forced to seek shelter, and we now see him at Bruno's side, slashed by the same shadows as his alter ego.

Similarly, respectable society is tainted by prurience and hypocrisy, like the Senator's guests who are charmed by Bruno's discussion of murder but fearful of the scandal caused by his excessive zeal. In the final

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chase scene, when the police expropriate a cab, its old lady occupant is delighted to be involved in a crime, and news of the murder has the effect of boosting the box office at the amusement park. On the other hand, Bruno, although a psychopathic murderer, is a figure of tremendous charm and even some semiserious moral ambiguity. Soon after entering the amusement park, he is accosted by a little boy who shoots a toy gun at him, to which he responds by bursting the child's balloon. But after the crime we see him guiding a blind man through traffic.

Before the end, however, Hitchcock has cut things down again to the dimensions of a thriller. In the novel, Guy actually kills Bruno's father, subsequently filling more than half the book with his anguish. In the film, Guy refuses to follow Bruno this far, preferring instead to incur the vengeful wrath that produces Hitchcock's most brilliant coda, in which Guy has to win a tennis match and reach the amusement park before Bruno has the chance to plant a clue that will convince the police of his guilt. No sequence in Hitchcock makes such brilliant use of the screen's fundamental method of producing suspense: parallel editing of simultaneous action. Moreover, the conclusion of the film, with Guy and Bruno struggling on a merry-go-round gone berserk, is both emotionally stunning and precisely suggestive of their entire relationship. For sheer invention, unfailing pertinence of every frame, and occasional suggestions of deeper purpose, *Strangers on a Train* is Hitchcock's masterpiece.

But, it will be said, the masterpiece of a low ambition. Such derogation is implied even in the applause of *Cahiers du Cinéma* critics and their numerous followers who have tried to elevate Hitchcock into the ranks of directors like Bergman, Antonioni and Truffaut. Although recent film criticism is typified by mindless emphasis on visual effects (thus Nicholas Ray can be thought an important director and *Lola Montes* an important film), most critics are made nervous by effects without theme or psychological insight. As a result, visual signs are read as if they were literary symbols, and directors like Hitchcock, whose meanings are his effects, become no less elusive for cinephiles than for traditionalists.

Yet no other director is so badly represented by translation into the assertions and propositions that criticism, being a tendentious, pattern-making activity, can scarcely avoid. A Hitchcock film can only be appreciated while it is seen, and is therefore perfect for the so-called "new sensibility." A critic like Susan Sontag, however, wouldn't be caught dead discussing Hitchcock because he is so relentlessly lowbrow and frivolous about meaning, whereas the new sensibility is only frivolous about craft.

As a craftsman, Hitchcock ranks with the best. He has taught essential lessons to directors with greater aspirations because he has realized one of the potentials of film form. From the first, cinema theoreticians recognized the unparalleled power of film, its ability to make the audience both a crowd and a collection of separate individuals (riveted to the screen in darkness that conceals the depth of their enslavement). Propaganda, it was thought, must inevitably result, and no one would be completely impervious to the appeal of screened messages. The history of film, however, has shown the form equally resistant to ideas and ideology. For the essence of cinema is action, gesture, surface: natural inciters not of reflection but of perception and feeling. What Hitchcock has supremely understood is that the line between perception and feeling can be manipulated by the director, can be sustained or broken, quickened or retarded so that the spectator feels only what the filmmaker intends. Moreover, he has understood that no other medium can simulate action with most of life's reality but none of its limitations. As a result, Hitchcock has produced a new experience, a new kind of art. It is low but powerful; it does not exploit the full range of his medium, but it takes to the limit one of the things that film can do more fully than any other art. In Robert Warshow's phrase, film is the "immediate experience." No director knows that better than Hitchcock.

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Doctor Williams: "Beautiful Blood, Beautiful Brain"

WEBSTER SCHOTT

And approaching the end of the novel in his mind as he sat there with his wife sleeping alone in the next room he could feel that something unusual had happened. Something had grown up in his life dearer than —It, as the end. The words from long practice had come to be leaves, trees, the corners of his house—such was the end. He had progressed leaving the others behind him.

—The Great American Novel

William Carlos Williams forces the kinds of questions we address to natural disasters, reports of miracles and works of genius. How? Why? From what inexplicable source?

He was an American original. In his seventy-nine years Williams led at least two lives, and at manic intensity. For some forty years he practiced medicine—obstetrics and pediatrics—in the small industrial town of Rutherford, New Jersey. He saw by his own account a million and a half patients and delivered two thousand babies. This was from 1910 until 1951, before the era of doctoring by answering service and beginning the medical day with a call to the stockbroker. Williams worked like a slave at medicine. It brought him neither fortune nor special rank. Instead, it gave him and us that other life beyond value, a life of art.

While stealing time between patients, catching images and ideas between house calls, scribbling at midnight, William Carlos Williams laid the foundation of the most consequential one-man body of modern literature in American history—a total of forty-nine books in every literary form we know and in forms we still have trouble classifying. He wrote some six hundred poems, four full-length plays, an opera libretto, fifty-two short stories, four novels, a book of essays and criticism, his autobiography, a biography of his mother, an American history, a book of letters, and translated a medieval Spanish novel. He wrote the five-volume epic-spectacular poem *Paterson* over a period of three decades. Williams' most important work had been done by the time he retired from medicine in 1951. When he died twelve years later, after a series of crippling strokes, William Carlos Williams had no peer as the total American writer.

Not our time but another time will fix Williams' place in American literature. For the present he stands first among his contemporaries. If the public did not draw him to its bosom as it did the performing Robert Frost or canonize him as it did T. S. Eliot, the new young poets of his era paid him the perfect homage. They became like him. Not Ezra Pound or E. E. Cummings, but finally William Carlos Williams freed American poetry from the irons of rhyme and meter. His disciples of liberation ranged from formal poets like Winfield Townley Scott and Karl Shapiro to insurgents like Charles Olson and Robert

✪ WEBSTER SCHOTT, a critic and business executive who lives in Kansas City, wrote this essay as the introduction to *Imaginations*, a collection of William Carlos Williams' earliest prose. The book, which he edited and annotated, will be published this spring by New Directions.

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Duncan. He was the instrument of change. Without him one cannot account for contemporary American poetry.

If Williams left tingling elegances to Wallace Stevens and academic grace to W. H. Auden, he chose larger. He seized experience and turned it into poetry hot with the blood of life. His was a found art that raised everything it touched—trees and birds, people and dogs, water and fruit, love and flowers—to a level of startled awareness. It was an art so embedded in his own personality and manner of living that even Williams could never translate it into a coherent system of aesthetics readily available to others.

William Burroughs once told the critic Conrad Knickerbocker that there was no such thing as willpower, only need. Driving William Carlos Williams was a need for both medicine and literature that exceeded the definitions of commitment. He turned his moods into work: "Periodicity of psychological and imaginative energy," he said in a notebook in 1930. "Work *all* the time—manic depression but learn to use yourself: when up drive in—when down assume the clerk—there's plenty of room for both." He pursued both medicine and art simultaneously. "Time meant nothing to me," he said in his autobiography. "I might be in the middle of some flu epidemic, the phone ringing day and night, madly, not a moment free. That made no difference . . . Five minutes, ten minutes can always be found. I had my typewriter in my office desk. All I needed to do was pull up the leaf . . . and I was ready to go . . . I worked at top speed. If a patient came in at the door while I was in the middle of a sentence, bang would go the machine—I was a physician. When the last patient left, up would come the machine . . . Finally, after 11 at night, when the last patient had been put to bed, I would always find the time to bang out 10 or 12 pages. In fact, I couldn't rest until I had freed my mind from the obsessions which had been tormenting me all day . . . Having scribbled I could rest."

Medicine fired and fed the poet. Art informed the doctor: "To treat a man as material for a work of art makes him somehow come alive for me." It also held him together: "Most of my life has been lived in hell—a hell of repression lit by flashes of inspiration, when a poem such as this or that would appear." There was not only space, but absolute necessity, for both writer and physician in Williams.

Mostly we know William Carlos Williams as the titan who created *Paterson,* as the revolutionary miniaturist of "The Red Wheelbarrow," or as the magnificent autumnal lover of "Asphodel That Greeny Flower." This is the artist commanding his powers. To know the doctor searching for his art and testing it, the artist tasting life and suffering it, or to know the literary heretic rationalizing his schism and anticipating the future, we need more. We need the iconoclastic and privately published (usually in France) doctor-poet of such strange and troubled books as *Kora in Hell, The Great American Novel, A Novelette,* and *Spring and All.* Qualified fictions that probe the idea of fiction, not wholly poetry but set with the jewels of poetry, they are William Carlos Williams' books of primary belief. They are also crisis books—crisis books because they show Williams immediately after his first poems, barely known and desperately struggling to erect a platform of ideas from which he could make sense to himself and whoever would read him. They show him breaking through a thicket of words and emotions to a belief in his own worth that was never shaken. A belief that poured the concrete of *Paterson* and gave Williams his heirs.

These are difficult books, these four, and not to be wished onto desert minds. They churn with giant ideas and powerful feelings, often pursued with the fragile butterfly net of intuition. There are no narrative lines except those in Williams' head. No conventions except those Williams invented as he went along. No genuflections to formality or propriety. Williams had no time and less taste for that. He was writing these books in search of a faith, not an audience. From three hundred to a thousand copies of each were printed. Fewer were sold. The radical present and the revolutionary future

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were Williams' goal, not an invitation into the lace-curtained living rooms of America. "I'll write whatever I damn please," he said in his preface to *Kora,* "whenever I damn please and as I damn please and it'll be good if the authentic spirit of change is on it."

This doesn't mean that Williams was living in splendid isolation among the Dantesque vistas of industrial New Jersey. The aesthetic upheavals of the post-World War I period (when all of these books were written) lifted Williams, too. His appetite for art was gargantuan. He consumed music, drama, painting, literature as if they were food. He visited France and Switzerland briefly. Through friends he had lines out to Dadaism, surrealism, futurism, objectivism, imagism, cubism, cacophonous music. These convulsions of aesthetics caught Williams at a crucial time—his late thirties and early forties—and he was struggling between discontent and assertion, self-examination and self-discovery. He was put down by poets who counted—Eliot, Stevens, Hilda Doolittle, even his old college pal Ezra Pound. As a physician he found meanness and stupidity thwarting his medicine and life itself. The nights looked like corpses, he says in *Kora.* It was hard to tell loss from gain and all beauty stood upon "the edge of the deflowering."

So Williams wrote, as always, to keep his sanity by extending the world he saw into the one that bloomed in his imagination. In *The Great American Novel* he ruminated over such vexing questions as, What makes a novel? Where are its sources? How does it become American? What should language do? One of the first antinovels written in America, the work becomes a commentary on its own construction. The luminous *Kora in Hell* grew out of compulsion. Like Kora, the Greek goddess of spring who was captured and taken to hell, "[I] thought of myself as Springtime [Williams writes] and I felt I was on my way to Hell (but I didn't get very far)." After a year of writing every day he had created an underground classic, one of the earliest models for contemporary prose poetry. Williams wrote *Spring and All* as a travesty on the typographically chaotic literature of the time (1923). He also wanted to push on with the freedom he had found in *Kora.* Thus he framed some of his finest poems—"The Red Wheelbarrow," "By the Road to the Contagious Hospital," "The Sea that Encloses Her Young Body"—in eccentric prose sermons on their principles. Years later Williams said, "[*Spring and All*] made sense to me, at least to my disturbed mind—because it was disturbed at that time—but I doubt it made sense to anyone else." *A Novelette* was another piece of imaginative prose written "for personal satisfaction" and to learn more about the problems of prose. He had "abandoned all hope of getting American readers of a special sort." Remembering *Kora,* Williams sat down, faced the page, and poured himself out in automatic paragraphs. He broke rules, defied logic, and charged his psychic battery. By dint of rhetoric if not force of argument, he also managed to wed his theories of art to his ideas about matrimony.

These books tell us as much about the how and why of William Carlos Williams as anything he wrote. All speak in the voices of autobiography, and they reveal an immensely complicated man: energetic, compassionate, socially conscious, depressive, urbane, provincial, tough, fastidious, capricious, independent, dedicated, completely responsive. To the charge that he contradicted himself, Walt Whitman replied that he embraced multitudes. So did Williams. He was the complete human being, and all of the qualities of his personality were fused in his writing. He possessed to the full those traits we associate with the myth of the American: ingenuity, lusty enthusiasm, and an absolute faith in the new. Yet despite all the riches of his personality and the fluids of exegesis embalming his writing in scholarship, Williams' writing came from a simple source—his belief in the imagination.

Long after these books, near the end of his career, Williams turned inward in "Asphodel That Greeny Flower" to seek out those truths that had held firm. He said:

> It is difficult
> to get the news from poems

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yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.

He was speaking of the power of the imagination to hold human beings to life and propel them onward. *Kora, The Great American Novel, Spring and All, A Novelette* are documents of that discovery. Williams made it for himself; it became the foundation of all his poetry, fiction, drama. And he extended it as a means of evaluating all other art.

Williams knew one reality. He created another reality to make the first manageable. Against the practice of medicine, following "the poor defeated body into gulfs and grottoes," he posed his flights of imagination into the intensity of living things, the splendors of association and dislocation. If these books are "about" anything—as opposed to being the things they are themselves—they are about the powers of the imagination to sustain and expand human consciousness. "To refine, to clarify, to intensify that eternal moment in which we alone live there is but a single force—the imagination," Williams says in *Spring and All.* "The only realism in art is of the imagination." It makes blackness beautiful. "The birth of the imagination is like waking from a nightmare. Never was the night so beneficent." In a mysterious psychoanalytic transaction with the self, imagination "gives the feeling of completion by revealing the oneness of experience, it rouses rather than stupefies the intelligence by demonstrating the importance of personality, by showing the individual, depressed before it, that his life is valuable—when completed by the imagination. And then only."

Words, language, the means of speaking the imagination, were also the barrier to penetrating the imagination. "Words are the flesh of yesterday," Williams says in *The Great American Novel.* "Progress is to get—But how can words get. Let them get drunk. Bah. Words are words." Worse yet, our words were English words trying to do American work. Struggling against the dead cultural whale of Europe, the American imagination had to re-create "everything afresh in the likeness of that which it was." Using spoken, heard American English, the imagination "affirms reality most powerfully . . . it creates a new object, a play, a dance which is not a mirror up to nature."

What did such theories mean in action? That Williams would see life brand-new but all of a piece. The hums of a dynamo and the screams of a woman in anguish are fused in the energy of the present. The discovery and exploration of America parallel Williams' search for the new speech to create the New World's art. Erotic juice flows through all things. A little car purrs to itself at the thought of night and longs to be a woman. Imagining turns words into things. It lifts them from beneath the nose and hurls them fresh as rain against Williams' consciousness. The poems of *Spring and All* turn from print into the things, the events themselves. Sun streams. Roses bloom. "Say it, no ideas but in things," Williams demanded. And his writing snaps pictures like a marvelous image machine.

Williams found a system that worked for him. The imagination became his source of calm, art, union with the universe. Riding along in his car with a yellow pad and pencil on the seat, stopping for locomotives, swerving to avoid ash carts, Williams plunged his mind into the deluge of objects and actions around him. He snatched poetry from the instant. He may have been the first writer in the world to fashion art from the dreaminess of driving a car. Swift, fragmentary, compressed, his technique was the product of his circumstances. He had to write his way because his medicine gave him no choice. Ringing telephones and waiting patients allowed no deliberation over sonnets or villanelles. Williams had to make art straight from common speech and uncommon imagination or no art at all. Succeeding at art and succeeding at life through art, Williams believed he had nailed truth down. What worked for him had to work for everyone. He was drunk with enthusiasm—sometimes even irrational—in celebrating what the imagination could do. He behaved like a

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prophet. Reading these four books now, we know he was.

In the last half of the twentieth century we've learned that we can be free only through the senses, and we've been struck by a sensual revolution. Industrialization triggered it. Technology completed it. William Carlos Williams anticipated it. Williams was our forebear, and if our time had any saintly men he was among them.

We live in a world where no one, neither God nor Caesar, is in charge. Our evils appear to be giants beyond personal reach. Our acts of holiness are performed by advisory committees. Daily existence often seems to be a demoralizing routine of psychological drudgery, physical tedium, and socially induced guilt. Our words usually mean something else. Like Dr. Zhivago, we think we may be dying of lies. Our actions are slow to cause effect. Yet the largest and swiftest action of all may precede the last action—storms of fire and rains of fatal dust. For most of us the world is unmanageable. There is little we can do except feel, see, hear—sense.

"The Poet should be forever at the ship's prow," Williams said. And he was. Driven to the edge of despair ("I had recourse to the expedient of letting life go completely," he says in *Spring and All*) for all kinds of reasons—his private life, his trips into the hells around him, his sense of America's loss—Williams retreated to the senses and found a piece of freedom through the imagination. He didn't tell us that the bitterness of loss could be halted by the imagination. "On the contrary," he said in *Kora,* "it [the loss] is intensified, resembling thus possession itself. But he who has no power of the imagination cannot even know the full of his injury." To Williams the ability to imagine became the ability to survive. It was a need as urgent as sexual hunger: "The imagination will not down . . . If it is not a dance, a song, it becomes an outcry, a protest. If it is not flamboyance it becomes deformity; if it is not art, it becomes crime. Men and women cannot be content any more than children, with the mere facts of a humdrum life—the imagination must adorn and exaggerate life, must give it splendor and grotesqueness, beauty and infinite depth."

Williams was discovering his program for modern American literature and his means of coping with brute reality. What he found has become a part of our own equipment for survival. He couldn't state the proposition as succinctly and clearly as we might like. He thought he heard the music of the soul and was in a hurry to get to its source. But he had all the component ideas for a working scheme of life in our modern industrialized society. Knowledge is endless and reality must ride on the imagination. The power to fantasize, to re-create, is the power to arrest the mercantile-mechanical crush on the sensibilities. To live the American life we must discover the American experience. We must either grow on the new or starve on the bones of the old. To make art, find the essential moment, seek primary quality: not a representation, but a separate existence in a mass of copies.

Williams' speculations and excursions in these four books open onto a vast sea. He was driven to create them because, like the great artists Camus sought, he lived to the full. Nothing was alien to him. His medicine took him to the tangled nerve centers of his fellowmen. He found his way back to order and joy through perfect visions. He told us we would have to do it too. "All beauty comes from beautiful blood and a beautiful brain," Walt Whitman said. Read William Carlos Williams and know it is true.

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The Revolving Bookstand . . . . . .

Out of Print

MICHAEL HOLROYD

About every nine months some British publisher celebrates a happy event. He will announce a new series. The books in question are to be cheaply priced and well produced; they will be of interest chiefly to students of English literature, but should appeal to all serious readers: and the first six titles are to be critical studies of the work of Conrad, George Eliot, Henry James, Joyce, D. H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf. The next six titles are equally impressive, equally predictable. They get off to a well-publicized start, and are reviewed everywhere. But after the first two dozen volumes have appeared, nothing more is heard of the venture. Then it is time for someone else to have the same idea, and the whole process starts again.

Such publishers, of course, are tempted by the education market, and their series are built around those novelists and poets who have been declared by our teachers of English to be "required reading." The result is that there exists a plethora of books about Conrad, Lawrence and the rest, but almost none about the many excellent writers (never reached by these series) whose work has failed to become a canonical part of English literature at the universities.

It is easy to understand the appeal of a generally accepted great tradition of literature. As a means of simplifying the vast and densely-grown jungle of the printed word, it has obvious practical uses. The sight of all those novels, plays, poems and biographies is tiring, and the prospect of plunging into them unaided, terrifying. To spare us this exertion, the don has undertaken to attend to all our literary luggage and act as a kind of valet who will pack up what is needed for a journey around the world. No wonder we rely on him so greatly.

The objection to this system is not necessarily an objection to the writers officially selected, but to the vicariously dismissive attitude it promotes. Unlike their continental counterparts, British and American publishers do not often maintain large backlists, with the result that the work of many fine authors all too soon goes out of print and becomes almost unobtainable. In this way the choice is taken out of our hands.

All of us, probably, have some favorite unfashionable author. Occasionally a minority taste can be powerful enough to make for some isolated masterpiece a small niche in literary history—Henry Green's *Loving* and Sylvia Townsend Warner's *Mr. Fortune's Maggot* have both deservedly achieved this status through the persistence of a small band of admirers. Sometimes, too, a novelist will, as it were, return from the dead. The recent resurrection of Jean Rhys, whose novels were rescued almost single-handedly by Francis Wyndham and have now been reissued, is a remarkable case in point. But it is also an exceptional case. The majority of forgotten writers are sunk without trace. Has anyone, for example, considered bringing out some of Gilbert Cannan's novels? Praised by Henry James, dismissed by D. H. Lawrence. Cannan spent the last half of his life in a lunatic asylum (without, according unreliably to Richard Aldington, any justification), and is certainly a controversial enough figure to warrrant some publisher looking again at *Round the Corner* or *Mendel.*

✪ MICHAEL HOLROYD's recent books include a two-volume biography of Lytton Strachey and *A Dog's Life,* a novel.

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The taste of the don and the whim of the filmmaker are the two ill-matched steeds to which a publisher's list of reprints is harnessed—and they draw it into some strangely paradoxical country. There can be no more striking example of this state of affairs than the plight of Patrick Hamilton. As a thriller writer, Patrick Hamilton is still well known, because his *Rope, Gaslight* and *Hangover Square* have all been filmed. But his finest work—the novels *Twenty Thousand Streets under the Sky* and *The Slaves of Solitude,* and his play *The Duke in Darkness*—is unknown because it does not appear on any English literature syllabus and has not attracted Alfred Hitchcock. There have been several attempts to revive interest in his novels, notably by Clancy Sigal, John Russell Taylor and J. B. Priestley, who described him as one of the "very few genuine original novelists." But when, more recently, Doris Lessing wanted to write a piece on him, she was told there was no curiosity about his books, and so her piece was never published.

Yet what she had to say was of vital significance to the whole condition of English literature today. For, in her opinion, Patrick Hamilton was

> a marvellous novelist who's grossly neglected. And I can't think of any reason for it unless he's not a member of one of the cliques, one of the invisible brotherhoods that exist in England and especially in English literary life. I'm continually amazed that there's a kind of roll call of OK names from the 1930s, sort of Auden and Isherwood, etc. But Hamilton is never on them and he's a much better writer than any of them . . . [He] was very much outside the tradition of an upper-class or middle-class writer of that time. He wrote novels about ordinary people. He wrote more sense about England, what was going on in England in the 1930s, than anybody else I can think of, and his novels are true now. You can go into any pub and see it going on. . . . If somebody asked me today to give him some novels that show what Britain is like now, I'd give him Patrick Hamilton's.

The position for writers of nonfiction is even more anomalous. Expensive volumes of history and biography are eagerly commissioned by publishers because quick money may be made for them. They are reviewed, on the whole, at far greater length than novels or volumes of poetry. For three months they continue to sell, are overtaken by even newer history and biography, then die. Yet it is palpably ridiculous for, let us say, Robert Gathorne-Hardy's memoir of Logan Pearsall Smith to be permanently not in print because of a system that prints too much.

The trouble would seem to be that the wrong standards are employed. Biographies, in particular, are valued not for their intrinsic literary merit, but for their "importance"; not for their originality of method, style or attitude, but for the new documents they quote. "Apparently original information goes better with publishers," Hugh Kingsmill ruefully commented when his *After Puritanism* had been turned down by an American publisher, ". . . A packet of unpublished letters dealing with the views on manure found by Samuel Butler in New Zealand would have helped."

Nonfiction is regarded by many critics as noncreative. They confuse invention with creation, and thereby relegate to the regions of the uncreative such writers as Boswell, Carlyle, Gibbon, Macaulay, Ruskin and, to all intents and purposes, Johnson. This is about as sensible as saying that a portrait or landscape painter must be noncreative, and an abstract painter creative—as if it were the subject that conferred creativity on an artist.

Left high and dry by this climate of opinion is the delicate art of autobiography to which, ironically, the English bring a particular talent. The autobiography of the late J. R. Ackerley, published recently, has been hailed by several leading critics as a minor masterpiece. Yet there is no guarantee that it will be allowed to pass Cyril Connolly's ten-year test and still be available in 1979. After all, Arthur Calder-Marshall's *The Magic of My Youth* is now available neither in hardback nor in paperback. Autobiographies disappear because their authors are not celebrated enough in nonliterary circles, and because the medium itself is overlooked by teachers and students of literature.

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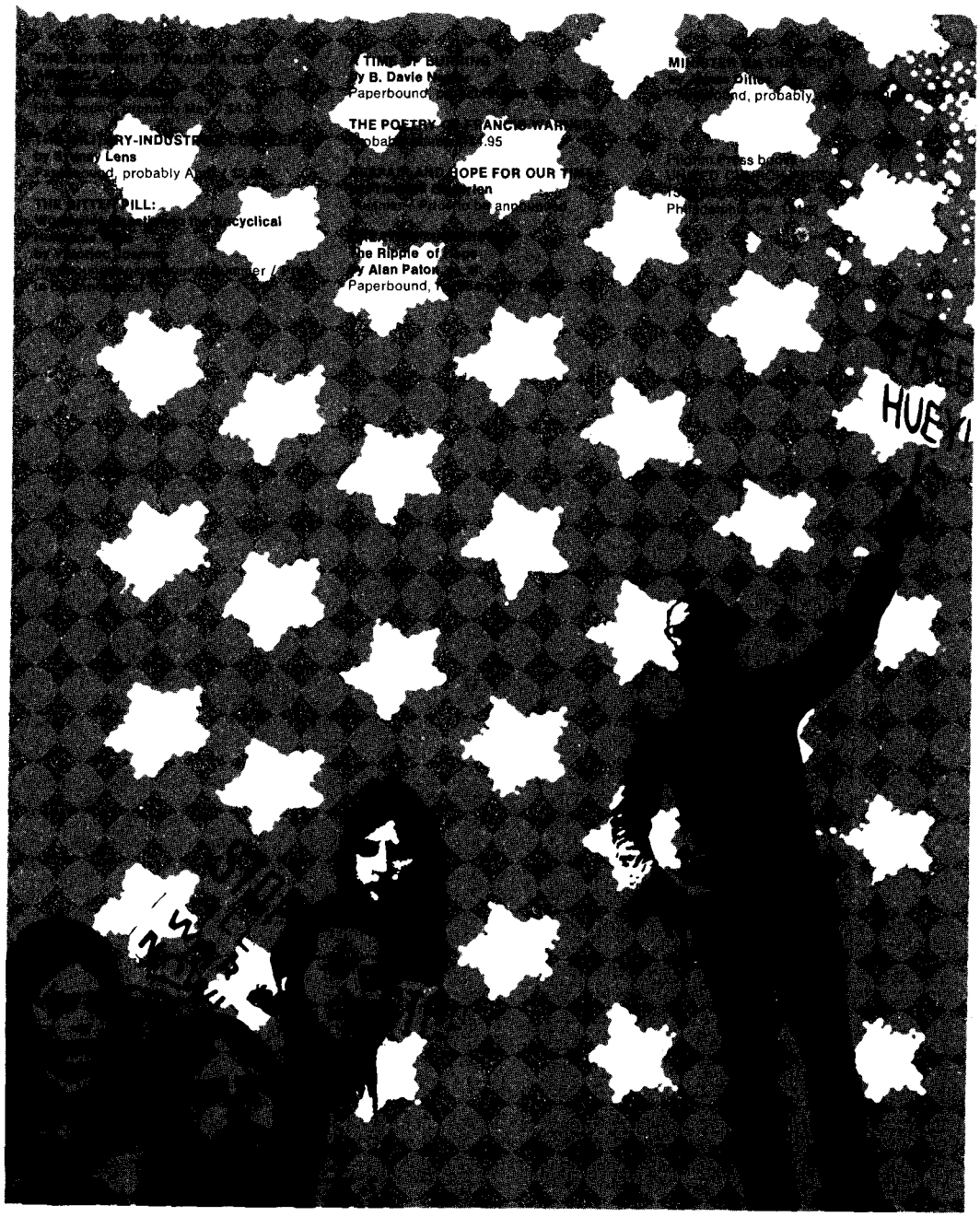
Spring-Summer 1970



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For this reason only the reminiscences of the famous are remembered. We all know, for instance, that Augustus John wrote *Chiaroscuro;* but how many people have read his son Romilly John's delightful reminiscences, *The Seventh Child,* a book that certainly deserves to be remembered? Most people have heard of Sir Arnold Lunn's autobiographical novel, *The Harrovians;* but who knows of his brother Brian Lunn's marvelous autobiography, *Switchback?* It should be known, and it could be, if only publishers would realize their potential power; if only, instead of following various fads and fashions in the hope of making a quick commercial killing, they tried to influence taste, to create demand. In place of all those repetitious series of critical studies of great names, why doesn't someone start a library of autobiographies, from Benjamin Haydon to Edwin Muir and Gerald Brenan's *A Life of One's Own?* A country that neglects such books doesn't deserve to have them.

In the stock market of unread books and lost reputations, there is a perpetual turmoil of activity, fascinating for literary speculators to observe. Whose head will break the surface? Who will sink? Who swim? Since fashion, especially educational fashion, plays such a large part in success of this kind, individual quality is not enough. And where common sense is blocked, eccentricity must find a way. The late John Holms, for example, a self-confessed genius and author of one short story in the *Calendar of Modern Letters,* still has an impressive band of admirers. Holms's technique, a rather silent one, was to insist on potential. His promise was almost infinite. He would do such things—what they were no one knew yet—but they would be the wonders of the earth.

More recently the novelist William Gerhardie has made claims to be the best-known unknown author in modern times. He has always, he points out, been especially well known to himself. But John Stewart Collis, whose unique series of books on natural phenomena has been compared to the work of Ruskin, finds Gerhardie's tactics at fault. Collis, with none of his volumes in print, refuses to admit that his name is not a household word, and his books international best sellers. "Tell them you are unjustly neglected," he maintains, "and they'll say: 'Come, let's neglect him a little more.' "

In spite of keen competition, Gerhardie now leads the table of concealed celebrities. A few years ago, at the age of seventy-one, he changed his name from Gerhardi to Gerhardie, reverting to an ancestral spelling that he had accidentally come across. This was an event. Numbers of reporters from the leading newspapers rang up to inquire why he had decided to do such a thing. Gerhardie had his answer ready. Shakespeare, he explained, had a final *e.* So did Dante, Blake and Goethe. Who was he to do otherwise? Such modesty was impressive, and was widely reported in the press.

Gerhardie sat back and waited. For a novelist whose splendid gifts have been praised by Arnold Bennett, Desmond MacCarthy, Katherine Mansfield, Edith Wharton and many others, it was ludicrous that not a single one of his novels should be in print. Quite lately he has been the subject of appreciative articles by Walter Allen, Michael Ivens, Olivia Manning, C. P. Snow and Philip Toynbee—all to no avail. He was an important influence on the work of, among others, William Cooper, Anthony Powell and Evelyn Waugh—but his own books are nearly impossible to get hold of. "Why was there no shouting?" demanded H. G. Wells after *Futility,* Gerhardie's first novel, was published. Since orthodox methods had failed, perhaps this announcement, Gerhardie reasoned, might remind publishers of his existence. Who would be the first to put his new name on a title page? So he waited for the shouting to begin. Eventually he received one letter about his change of name. It was from his bank manager asking for a specimen of his new signature —an incident worthy, perhaps, of a Gerhardie novel.

Behind the big names of contemporary writing there stands a shadow cabinet of writers waiting to take over once the Wind of Change has blown. My own vote goes to Hugh Kingsmill as Leader of this opposition. Kingsmill is remembered by the reading public more as an ebullient personal-

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ity, a man of abounding wit and vitality, than as a serious critic and biographer, so that now, nearly twenty years after his death, his writing is in danger of being forgotten altogether. In a moving and unusual memoir comprising an exchange of letters, two of Kingsmill's friends, Malcolm Muggeridge and Hesketh Pearson, brilliantly succeeded in re-creating him as one of the most stimulating of companions. But they made little attempt to establish him as a clearly recognizable literary figure. In his own lifetime, his most successful works were an anthology, *Invective and Abuse,* which made people think of him as a sort of literary Jack the Ripper, and his parody of "The Shropshire Lad," praised by Housman as being by far and away the best ever written:

What, still alive at twenty-two,
A clean, upstanding chap like you?
Sure, if your throat 'tis hard to slit,
Slit your girl's, and swing for it. . . .

One of the difficulties about Kingsmill's writing is that it fits into no neat category. He did not inhabit Bloomsbury or visit Garsington; he did not belong to a Left or Right Book Club, or fight in the Spanish Civil War. His three meetings with T. S. Eliot he likened to audiences given by the Pope to some obscure Nonconformist minister on a visit to Rome; and on the single occasion he met Wyndham Lewis he was suspected of poisoning the food and asked to leave.

His admirers seldom agree as to what is his finest book. Malcolm Muggeridge, I fancy, prefers his *Frank Harris;* Hesketh Pearson liked his *The Return of William Shakespeare;* and my own favorite is *The Progress of a Biographer.* In his recently published letters, George Orwell pronounced Kingsmill's *The Sentimental Journey* to be the best biography of Dickens—it has now been out of print for over thirty years. He also reveals that, hoping Kingsmill's *After Puritanism* might be reprinted, he had written about it in a review, but that this passage had been omitted by the editor, for, as with Patrick Hamilton, there was no curiosity about his books.

But curiosity will not come of itself, it must be stimulated. What is needed now is an anthology of the finest passages from his books, *The Best of Kingsmill.* But will any publisher have the courage and enterprise to do this?

Far more might be achieved, by making Kingsmill's writings available, than justice to a single author. For twenty years the literary standards that he championed in the *New English Review* have been eclipsed by educationist critical systems whose control on what we read, and therefore on what we publish, has been paramount. But Kingsmill belonged to no school of critics. He judged literature by its truthfulness, and by its power to reveal individual truths through humor, pathos, tenderness. No one had a sharper eye than he for detecting humbug. The truth he sought for is the truth we live, not speak, so that were we to give currency to his uncompromising values, there might well be a revolution in our present tastes and literary attitudes.

At the very least there would be fewer series of books about Henry James, D. H. Lawrence and Conrad.

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NEGLECTED BOOKS

For this first issue in a new decade, the Editors asked a number of distinguished men and women to name that book published in the past quarter of a century that they believed to have been the most undeservedly neglected. Some fifteen years ago we asked a group this question, and our correspondents made a small impact on American literary history. Two of them—Margaret Mead and Alfred Kazin—chose Henry Roth's Call It Sleep, *which led to that book's rediscovery and reissue, and subsequent critical acclaim.*

The responses of this year's participants in the game are presented below.

My vote goes for: *A Free and Responsible Press,* Report of the Commission on Freedom of the Press, University of Chicago Press, 1947. The foreword is by Robert M. Hutchins, who served as chairman of a Commission that included John M. Clark, John Dickinson, William E. Hocking, Archibald MacLeish, Harold D. Lasswell, Charles E. Merriam, Reinhold Niebuhr, Robert Redfield, Beardsley Ruml, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., and George N. Shuster.

I have just reread the report post-Agnew, and I find its diagnosis and prescriptions even more compelling than they were twenty years ago. The description of the contemporary condition of the media is, of course, dated, since the report was prepared pre-television. But the basic problems of freedom and responsibility in the mass media are all laid out in anticipation of the onrushing communications revolution. The sins of omission and commission as we passed into the electronic era have been precisely those the concerned scholars warned against.

The report ran into the vested interests and entrenched hostility of the press when it was originally issued, and was rendered a muted trumpet so far as the general public was concerned. The message is still urgent, as the Vice-President has reminded us.

HARRY S. ASHMORE

*

I have personally neglected almost every important book published in the last quarter of a century so I haven't the slightest idea which ones have been neglected by others as well.

There are my own 103 books, all of them published in the last quarter-century and all of them (without exception) neglected. On the other hand, they all get all the attention they deserve so I can't nominate any of them.

ISAAC ASIMOV

*

Rhymes of a Pfc by Lincoln Kirstein (New Directions, 1964). The best volume of poems directly about World War II.

W. H. AUDEN

*

My nomination for the "most neglected book" is actually a trilogy: Conrad Richter's *The Trees, The Fields, The Town* (Knopf, 1940, 1946, 1950, respectively; reissued in one volume, *The Awakening Land,* in 1966). If it is not neglected, it is certainly not well enough known. I go back every couple of years to read the continuing story of Sayward Luckett from childhood to old-ladyhood, from wilderness to civilization, and I never cease to marvel at Richter's evocative powers in the reconstruction of a vanished past, and it is for this reason that I think of it as very literally a "marvelous" book, in a day when the adjective is overused or wrongly used so often.

CARLOS BAKER

*

I think that John Lukacs' *Historical Consciousness* (Harper & Row, 1968) is a remarkable work.

JACQUES BARZUN

*

John Pairman Brown's *The Displaced*

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Person's Almanac (Beirut: Khayat, 1961; Beacon Press, 1962).

MARSTON BATES

*

I haven't had much time for reading in the past quarter of a century and my opinion on the subject, if I could find one, would be quite worthless. Forgive me and all success to your project.

SAMUEL BECKETT

*

Neglect is a matter of context. Lucien Febvre was one of the most distinguished historians of France. Together with Marc Bloch he founded *Annales,* one of the most influential historical journals in the world. He was professor at the Collège de France, the highest position a French scholar can achieve. With Bloch, he revolutionized the study of social history. His masterpiece, *Le Problème de L'Incroyance Au XVI^e Siècle,* written before the war, was published in Paris by Albin Michel in 1947. Inexplicably, it has never been translated.

Le Problème de L'Incroyance is about Rabelais but, inevitably, in the hands of a master like Febvre, it is more than that. It is, like Johan Huizinga's *The Waning of the Middle Ages,* a history of sensibility. The problem to which Febvre initially addressed himself was, was Rabelais an atheist? The tone of Rabelais is ribald and coarse, his method is the cock-and-bull story, but he wrote biting commentary on the political and religious life of his time.* How could this be squared with his role as a priest and member of a Franciscan order?

In seeking to reconcile these anomalies, Febvre came up with a completely unexpected answer. It was the question that was wrongly put, he said. The categories of thought of the sixteenth century simply do not entertain such a concept as disbelief. This led him to the broader question of sensibility, or what the French call "collective psychology." Did men at other times feel the way we do today? If we examine their imagery—he used as source of evidence poetic texts—what do we find? In the sixteenth century, Febvre found, for example, that men had little sense of visual perception. Their metaphors were of sound and smell, but not sight. Hearing is more important than vision and all literature of that age, prose as well as poetry, exhibits this sensibility.

It is this genre, the history of moral temper, of emotion and of sensibility, of which Lucien Febvre was the master. Lucien Febvre was one of the great historians of Europe. How does one explain the neglect of him here? It is a question of failed sensibility.

DANIEL BELL

*

Because the criticism of new poetry is now mostly abandoned to contemporary poets, who are coterie-ridden and jealous, the most neglected of our books are the rare volumes of superb new poetry. My candidates for the most unjustly neglected books of the last decades are therefore several volumes of poetry—*The Boatman* by Jay Macpherson (Oxford, 1957); *A Harlot's Hire* by Allen Grossman (Walker-DeBerry, 1961); the really astonishing *Preambles and Other Poems* by Alvin Feinman (Oxford, 1964); and, most of all, the several volumes by A. R. Ammons, culminating in his *Selected Poems* (Cornell, 1968), for Ammons is now much the best poet we have, although still so little read and known.

HAROLD BLOOM

*

To my mind, the most neglected poet of the last fifteen years or so is Abbie Huston Evans. Her latest book, published by Harcourt, Brace in 1961, *Fact of Crystal,* received the Loines Award, and is in every way a remarkable achievement.

LOUISE BOGAN

*

I nominate as the most neglected book of the last twenty-five years Fred Polak's *The Image of the Future,* translated by

* There is an excellent translation of *Gargantua and Pantagruel* by Samuel Putnam in *The Portable Rabelais* (Viking), reissued in 1955.

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Elise Boulding (2 volumes. New York: Oceana Publications; Leyden: A. W. Sythoff, 1961) and originally published as *De Toekomst is Verleden Tijd* (2 volumes. Utrecht: W. de Haan, 1955). This book received the Council of Europe Award in 1955. Elise Boulding's translation has been condensed into a one-volume edition, now awaiting publication. This is a book that has had a profound effect on my own thinking, but that does not seem to have received the attention it deserves.

KENNETH E. BOULDING

*

Richard Broxton Onians' *The Origins of European Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 1951). About the body, the mind, the soul, the world, time and fate. New interpretations of Greek, Roman and kindred evidence, also of some basic Jewish and Christian beliefs.

Here is Vico's *New Science* back again (Cornell University Press, 1968), and doing no better in the scholarly world than it did the first time round.

N. O. BROWN

*

In response to your question about neglected masterpieces, may I nominate Jacob Wassermann's *The Maurizius Case* (Liveright, 1960).

ROBERT BRUSTEIN

*

The Sexual Cycle of Human Warfare by Major Norman Walter, published in London at the Mitre Press in 1950. This book is shamefully neglected. Indeed, I doubt if more than a handful of people know it or know of it. And yet its thesis is original and highly suggestive. It is, briefly, that war is a psychobiological phenomenon, not a political one, and that it can best be studied in terms of such genetic phenomena as hybridization, exogamy and the like. Nature explodes the human group with the aim of genetic recombination. Soldiers never know why they're fighting ("We're here because we're here because we're here because we're here" was a song of the First World War) and politicians think they know. But the real motives for war lie at the biological level. War, like sex, is ineradicable from human society because war is very close to sex.

ANTHONY BURGESS

*

To invite a poet to determine which, for him, "is the most neglected book published in the last quarter of a century," imposes a task too embarrassing to contemplate.

MELVILLE CANE

*

You ask a very difficult question. After much head-scratching, I would suggest Isaiah Berlin's *The Hedgehog and the Fox* (Simon and Schuster, 1953). I believe these essays had many insights that deserve reexamination.

ERWIN D. CANHAM

*

One of the books I have read within the last quarter of a century and which, in my opinion, can be classified as "the most undeservedly neglected book" is *Class, Caste and Race* by Oliver C. Cox (Doubleday, 1948).

This is one of the most profound and penetrating analyses of racial and related problems I have ever read. Cox places the American racial problem within the context of man's universal predicament.

KENNETH B. CLARK

*

I would recommend Max Scheler's *The Nature of Sympathy,* which was translated by Peter Heath from the German and published by Yale University Press in 1954. It is a lovely work by a wonderfully tormented German theologian-philosopher-observer of the human predicament.

ROBERT COLES

*

How little notice must a book draw to qualify as "neglected"? In my own reading, the book that I came upon "late" and that

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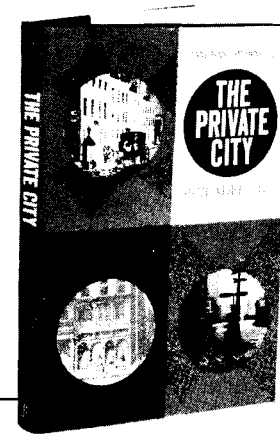

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received, as far as I know, not *enough* discussion, was Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* (Beacon, 1955). One writer recently said he thought it spelled out, albeit sparsely, the most compelling alternative to Freud and Marx as a basic doctrine of man. I think it should be read today especially in view of the enormous current emphasis on man's need to be "natural" (a notoriously empty word) since Huizinga puts the stress on man's capacity for and need for cultural creativity for no instrumental purpose, but also shows that when man transcends the "natural" by cultural and imaginative elaboration and recreation he is then most essentially *man*. Huizinga is a much needed corrective both to the axioms of industrial society and to the neo-Rousseauian worship of nature that is beginning to emerge as a backlash against it. As a theologian I see in Huizinga a way for man to "be religious" (which I think he really wants and needs to be) without feeling he must engage in a *sacrificio intellectus*. Religion is a form of play, it is *ludic,* and only our cultural bias makes that less important than *"cognitive."*

Homo Ludens did receive some comment and notice when it first appeared in English, but not nearly enough. I hereby nominate it as the most neglected book of the past twenty-five years.

HARVEY COX

*

"The most neglected book published within the last quarter of a century" I do not feel qualified to name. But an unusually fine book published during this period that has been undeservedly allowed to drop out of sight is Isabel Bolton's *Many Mansions* (Scribner's, 1952). The author herself thinks of it as the last of a trilogy, which includes *Do I Wake or Sleep?* and *The Christmas Tree,* because all offer a view of time past as it impinges on time present. *Many Mansions* seems to me the most effective of the three. It gives with uncommon clarity and sensitiveness the feelings and reflections of an old woman whose life has been largely a search for a son born out of wedlock and early lost to her. She dies when she is just about to meet her grandson. But the interest of the book is not alone that attaching to her story and her character. It lies also in the background of social history against which these are displayed or with which they are intertwined. It lies as well in what the novel has to say and to suggest about the "generation gap," a phrase that the old lady recognized without naming, and about the ways in which, as she discovered, it can, roughly, be bridged. It lies not least in the felicity of Isabel Bolton's style. I hope that the book, along with its predecessors, will be revived.

BABETTE DEUTSCH

*

I would nominate Crawford Power's *The Encounter* (Sloane, 1950), a novel about a priest, his dreams—that is literal *dreams*—and his human commitments. It seems to me to be the best and most mysterious and compelling statement of the strange ways in which the Lord works—or doesn't work—that I know. It is a moving and original book.

JAMES DICKEY

*

Alas, I can't call immediately to mind some secret masterpiece, ignored by all but myself . . . I can think of a number of books from earlier times I should like to see reprinted and re-enjoyed, but I gather that breaks the rule.

I think the poetry of Ezra Pound's British disciple, Basil Bunting, has so to speak surprised me most . . . I mean that it could lie asleep like that for thirty years and only be discovered in the last ten years. Perhaps he's always been better known with you.

So Basil Bunting's *Loquitur* (published here in England by Fulcrum Press in 1965) is what I should offer; I think he must one day take his place with Auden, Frost, Williams and the rest.

JOHN FOWLES

*

Your idea of rescuing neglected books from oblivion strikes me as a most excel-

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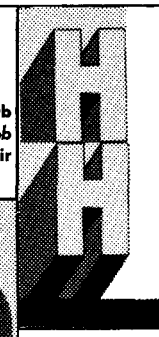

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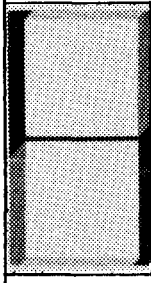

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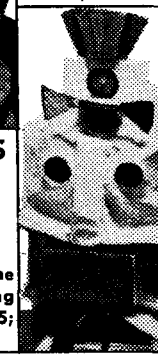

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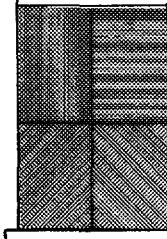

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lent one, and, as a matter of fact, I have a candidate. The book is rather specialized and is not likely to appeal to a very wide audience. Still, I think it might be worth calling to the attention of your readers, especially since I believe it was never published in the United States. The author is John McManners, and the title is *French Ecclesiastical Society Under the Ancien Régime: A Study of Angers in the Eighteenth Century,* published by Manchester University Press in 1961. The book is a brilliant, affectionate, and at the same time detached and sardonic portrait of a town in eighteenth-century France whose single industry in a very real sense was the church. By digging through the most recondite sources and making sense out of what must have appeared at the beginning a mess of unrelated facts and trivial reports, Mr. McManners has succeeded in clarifying confused issues, laying out, as it were, before our eyes the life of a city which was engaged, above all, in religious observances and in its religious business, and has done so with so much skill and so much historical objectivity that what emerges is a wholly authentic and convincing account of a single town in the process of change and face to face with revolution. Mr. McManners is a master of research and possesses the synthetic historical imagination at its finest. As many historians know, the eighteenth century, particularly in France, is normally portrayed as a single, simple fight between the forces of darkness and the forces of light. Of course, if one happens to be not a Christian, the forces of light are the philosophes; if one is a Christian, the forces of light are the representatives of the church. Mr. McManners avoids such unfortunate oversimplification; he shows life as it really was—complex in all its manifestations. He rescues a number of interesting individuals from oblivion, he clarifies complicated matters of rivalry among clerical orders or houses, and in that sense greatly advances our knowledge of the eighteenth century in France. I can think of few books that I would rather give to the student of history —even of other periods—than this one.

PETER GAY

Your letter has given me weeks of intense angst, of brooding and rereading. I am still light-years away from a fully satisfactory answer; most of the books I have loved over the last twenty-five years have been well praised; but I have come to a choice of sorts. Here it is: *Prater Violet* by Christopher Isherwood (Random House, 1945; London: Methuen, 1946).

Modest, even perfunctory, in tone, it survives through sheer charm, and a surprising poignancy. The mood of a tragic time is beautifully, if elliptically, caught, and the portrait of Bergmann is an enduring delight. It will live longer than many more ambitious, conscientious novels.

BRIAN GLANVILLE

*

I have a candidate: *The Ethics of Redistribution,* by Bertrand de Jouvenel (Cambridge: the University Press, 1951). As far as I know, this is the only book on an issue that I think most of us would agree provides one of the motivating forces of national policy in the twentieth century, and probably the twenty-first, too, and that is the drive toward the equalization of income. It is also a very good book on the subject. That incomes should be more equal is taken for granted by everybody. That they should be entirely equal raises qualms in some of us, but our thinking on such matters is so unformed we cannot imagine any reasons why, aside from selfishness, there should be any inequality at all. De Jouvenel can. He ignores the purely economic reasons for some degree of inequality (incentives, investments), not because they are unimportant but because he does want to concentrate on the ethical issues and the social consequences, and he has written one of the most original and stimulating books I have ever read in the area of social policy.

NATHAN GLAZER

*

I must have neglected reading neglected books. But isn't the real point now that books are altogether neglected, as we are ushered by Marshall McLuhan into a new "galaxy" of bookless bliss?

E. H. GOMBRICH

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My neglected book is *A House in Bryanston Square,* by Algernon Cecil, published in England by Eyre and Spottiswoode in May, 1944, during the last year of the Second World War, and issued here by Harcourt, Brace in 1952. The book sits on the same shelf as Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici* and *The Education of Henry Adams.* It is a kind of autobiography of the ideas that passed through the civilized and well-stored mind of a member of the ancient Cecil family when he lived in one of the early nineteenth-century squares inhabited by the more opulent citizens of London. *A House in Bryanston Square* is not easy reading, for the author writes allusively and assumes a reader as widely read as himself. It is a protest against middle-mindedness which refuses to think theocratically, and its message is that "no country will be great, nor any world tranquil, where there is no partnership between the living, the dead and those about to die." I find myself coming back to that house again and again, and each time to be jolted by some new insight; for like some vintage wine, the book improves and gains body with age.

G. B. HARRISON

*

I was delighted and intrigued by your invitation, couched in wonderfully ambiguous terms. At first my imagination ran riot, and only came under control when I realized that you are probably chiefly concerned with books that are undeservedly neglected.

I have a nomination. It is, *The Defense of Gracchus Babeuf before the High Court of Vendôme,* edited and translated by John Anthony Scott, and published by the University of Massachusetts Press in 1967.

Until such a work as this is available in paperback and is widely studied in schools and colleges, it may fairly be regarded as a neglected masterpiece.

ANTHONY HECHT

*

The most neglected book I know of is a novel, *Mojo Hand,* written by Jane Phillips and published by Trident in 1966.

It's about a search for roots—in this case, black roots. But it goes beyond and deeper, becoming that quality of personal discovery which is simultaneously universal.

NAT HENTOFF

*

Only a publisher can know what exquisite torture it is to be asked to choose a "neglected" book. I have only to turn to my own backlist and to lay my heart bare, as Poe said—Poe said that about the heart not the backlist—for you to know about a score of neglected books.

Most publishers—well, some publishers—suffer too much from the public's rebuff. Each year I publish books that deserve better than to sink without a trace—an Eton headmaster, Robert Birely, once wrote a book about such books called *Sunk Without a Trace* (Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962) and I published it, an almost unknown book, too.

Maybe books are not really neglected, after all. They are just appreciated selectively, as it were. After all, for every book there is at least one believing reader, its publisher.

WILLIAM JOVANOVICH

*

Your invitation does not specify a neglected *American* book, so I nominate a novel called *Blood from the Sky* by Piotr Rawicz, translated by Peter Wiles (Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964). In the *New York Review of Books,* February 20, 1964, I said:

> Rawicz's novel, in addition to its mute, stony grief, its oblique but overwhelming rendering of the [Nazi] terror, is also in fact (if incredibly) humorous; is also lustful, lyric, clever, exciting. Indeed it has many of the textures of (shall we say) a fine secular novel. In short, Rawicz has not been prevented by his feelings from transmuting the source of those feelings into ruthlessly truthful art.

If a foreign book is ineligible, I nominate an American novel *re*published in recent years and neglected then as earlier: *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin, first published in 1899 (Capricorn Books, 1964). In his section on it in *Patriotic Gore,* Edmund

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Wilson quite rightly calls it "beautifully written" and an anticipation of D. H. Lawrence. It has never had anything like the attention it deserves.

STANLEY KAUFFMANN

*

A neglected book I am happy to call to the attention of your readers is Martin Green's *The Problem of Boston*. It was originally published by Norton in 1966, and is now only available in their paperback edition. *The Problem of Boston* is a thoughtful examination of the rise and fall of "Brahmin" culture in Boston. It aims to understand that splendid moment in American history when, in one community at any rate, our high culture was also the official and popular culture of the democracy. It also tries to understand why this moment was so short-lived, and how it was that the spirit of modern literature eventually destroyed "the Athens of America." In view of the way in which society today is being shaken by the—hitherto futile—effort to come to terms with the spirit of modernity, Green's book is both illuminating and suggestive. An awful lot of people are thinking about this subject and are writing about the problem of culture, counter-culture, and what Lionel Trilling has called "adversary culture." But I have discovered, to my surprise, that very few of these people seem to have heard of *The Problem of Boston*.

IRVING KRISTOL

*

I name *The Ordeal of the Animals* by Mel Morse (Prentice-Hall, 1968).

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

*

The book I have in mind is a somewhat technical one, I realize; but I think it of major importance and have seen very little reference to it even in professional literature. It is J. J. Gibson's *The Perception of the Visual World* (Houghton Mifflin, 1950). Gibson has published a book essentially on the same subject since then (*The Senses as Perceptual Systems*). I consider the first superior and with more impact. One reviewer did write: "The ideas in the book are too original and important to be given in a review; the whole book should be read."

SUSANNE K. LANGER

*

The Sufis by Idries Shah (Doubleday, 1964): When this book appeared in Britain, it got an astonishingly large welcome for what is on the face of it a way-out subject. Robert Graves in a foreword described a feeling of recognition, "yes, this is for me," among people who had become resigned to a solitary holding of "peculiar" views. At first it was poets and writers who tended to recognize its importance, but now its influence is spreading where long overdue—among scientists, psychiatrists, biologists and so on. But I gather reviews in the States weren't very perceptive. For instance, the *New York Times Book Review* seemed to resent claims made: it does make large claims for influence on the West in places where traditional scholarship sees none. Well, I've had the experience of watching a dear friend, a Spanish and Portuguese scholar, flying into a rage with: "What nonsense!"—then rushing off to follow up suggestions, and returning months later with: "Good God, how is it we didn't see it before? It is lying right out there in the open." But it isn't facts so much, although there are facts enough, as indications of doors in places that have been overlooked, of new ways of looking at a thing. It is a seminal book, by a Sufi teacher, whose task it is to reintroduce material in the West, at a time that Sufis know is ripe for this type and style of introduction. We get it in this way: but Sufi teachers teach as is right for a community; they have used music, dancing, gestures, jokes, ritual—anything. One difficulty for those conditioned to conventional scholarship is how the book is written. Sufism is above all a way of relearning to use the mind: the book is a demonstration of it. It doesn't put new wine into old bottles. Like other books from the same source, it does what it describes. This is "the scatter method," explained in the book, and people who aren't flexible enough to read differently

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can't profit from it. Other people who get put off are those in search of flamboyant mysticism, of "gurus," of emotional kicks, of rigid disciplines and hierarchies. The Sufis don't provide these. "Mysticism," to the Sufi, is more of a science than a "trip." An example is their approach to E.S.P., practical, and divorced from the esoteric and the religious. E.S.P. phenomena, as we experience them now, are the first stirrings of a human organ in development; a burgeoning capacity of the human community, which is seen as an organism, a whole. Sufism has to be modern: if of no use to a contemporary community, then it is not Sufism; under one name or another, in one form or another, it has always been in the world, changing as the world changes, the perennial philosophy. This book, then, is of most use to those who can recognize the times and places in their lives when a yeast of growth has been most active, and who want to go on from there.

DORIS LESSING

*

It is much easier to recall books that have been overrated than to dig up mute inglorious masterpieces. But, although I cannot be categorical or superlative, I can mention one highly original novel which was—in my opinion—unduly neglected. This is *A Canticle for Leibowitz* by W. M. Miller, Jr. (Lippincott, 1960), a fascinating sortie of the satirical imagination, cast in the mode of science fiction with religious overtones. A decade after publication it seems even more of a fable for the age of space travel and nuclear warfare, the sort of *conte philosophique* that Voltaire might have written, had he addressed himself to the twentieth century.

HARRY LEVIN

*

Can there be any doubt that Wright Morris is our most ignored major novelist? Not one of his works of fiction has ever received the critical attention or the popular acclaim that they all deserve. The most scandalously neglected of Morris' books has been *Man and Boy* (Knopf, 1951). A masterpiece of compressed wit, it says more about American motherhood and other institutions of our contemporary civilization in two hundred pages than any other novel I know.

KENNETH S. LYNN

*

Not long after the original small printing of Wright Morris' semi-novel, semi-documentary *The Home Place* was published, I tried to buy a copy. Bookstores had none. Scribner's had none. Wright Morris saw no need to tell an overeager collegian how to find one. Rare book lists failed to turn it up. The postmistress back in my little Nebraska hometown, where many of the photos that face the text were taken, was of no help: "No one *here* would buy that book; why, Mr. Morris didn't even take pictures of the pretty houses—just old dilapidated and rusty things." That was in 1948. For years, no one interfered with my long-term faculty loan copy of the University of Chicago Library's edition, even though penciled inside was a notation about the extreme rarity of the book. After twenty years the University of Nebraska put out a modest paperback version, perhaps to coincide with Morris' new *God's Country and My People,* a less modest picture-and-text book that reused a few of the earlier photos. If not the most neglected book of the time, it was one of the best of the neglected ones. Having come from there (Morris and I and many other greater and lesser folk are *from* Nebraska; who stays?), I can testify to the authenticity of the dialogue, and the revelatory power of the pictures in this novelistic essay on humor and quiet desperation in the lives of visiting city guests and the enduring plain people of the plains, folk they had physically but never wholly spiritually left behind. I hope that one day when Wright Morris finally receives the honors and awards that are long overdue, more people will find *The Home Place.*

MARTIN E. MARTY

*

I nominate Edmund Taylor's *Richer by Asia* (Houghton Mifflin, 1947; 2nd ed. 1964). This book more than any I know captured the ambiguities of our developing understanding of Asia, within the intense

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atmosphere of the closing days of World War II prefiguring what lay ahead.

Edmund Taylor wrote *The Strategy of Terror: Europe's Inner Front* (Houghton Mifflin, 1940; rev. ed. 1942) just before Pearl Harbor and helped define the ethical issues of 1940. He has written two large studies of the postwar world: *The Fall of the Dynasties: The Collapse of the Old Order 1905-1922* (Doubleday, 1963); reprinted in 1967 as *The Fossil Monarchies: The Collapse of the Old Order 1905-1922* (Harmondsworth: Penguin) and *Awakening from History* (Gambit, 1969).

Richer by Asia, his most important book, was written just too early and got lost between the others.

MARGARET MEAD

*

I'm not anything like well enough read to do justice to your question, and I should probably take some time to ponder it. But the first book that leaps to mind—since I think it's a great book and virtually no one I've ever mentioned it to has read it—is Ernst Juenger's *On the Marble Cliffs* (New Directions, 1947). I'd certainly put it high in any such list, anyway. I should say that it's been a few years since I last read it, myself—too long for me to venture to say much about it just like that.

W. S. MERWIN

*

My first recommendation would be a book called *On Not Being Able to Paint* by "Joanna Field," the pseudonym of Marion Milner, a Freudian London psychoanalyst, published by William Heinemann, Ltd., London, in 1950. There is also an American edition, published by International Universities Press, 1963.

I should also add that only relatively few people—through an unusual concretion of somewhat dissimilar abstract directives: abstract art, psychoanalysis, an interest in "automatic" techniques, a suspicion that any actual work of art represents both archetypical and historical congruences, *et cetera* —exist to whom the book might be so meaningful. That is, when read in a much wider cultural context than the author implies. My point can be made most directly by saying that the title can obviously be taken in two ways, and the second meaning, unexpectedly, is the only one: the book, in brief, is about a psychoanalyst who has no talent for art, who wanted to be a holiday painter, and, through that rigorous psychoanalytic honesty at its best, discovered that everything she had been taught about how to paint was "unreal." That is, that despite her desire to make perfectly natural landscapes or still lifes, they would, of their own accord, want to turn into the fantastic, to the impulse of H. Bosch, or Lewis Carroll, or the Goya of the etchings.

It is interesting that the only books she read about art were the practical "handbooks on how to paint written by painters." That is, she stumbled on the deepest inner core of Dada (and especially surrealism) as creative (as different from their social subversiveness), so that her book is wholly independent testimony that one of the fertile creative principles of an aspect of modern art is not only culturally highly sophisticated, but equally deeply rooted in something eternal—in an honest and self-aware human being. Seemingly, she knew nothing at all about sophisticated contemporary culture in painting, and arrived at a parallel position simply through a struggle to make a satisfying, conventional, "ahistorical" picture. The fact that she has no particular aesthetic talent is an advantage in this case, as it makes what her literal illustrations represent wholly unambiguous —that is, they are not fantastic *and* beautiful like Goya, where horror and fantasy are presented with ultimate plastic harmony, but are sheer horror and fantasy. I think only a person of extreme intelligence and implacable self-honesty could write a book with the self-directed title, *On Not Being Able to Paint.*

My second choice would also be a book by a woman (a daughter of Sir Herbert Grierson, the famous Edinburgh scholar), Madame Janet Teissier du Cros who married a Frenchman on the eve of the Second World War, and spent that war, including the German occupation, in a provincial village in France, *as a Scotswoman* (whom many of the French regarded as more sus-

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pect and alien than the Germans). I have rarely in my life read something as honest and unromantically heroic—she had two babies from the few leaves her husband managed during those five years—she scrounged with largely hostile local peasants to survive (the Lévi-Strausses endured the same experiences a few doors away). The book was published in this country in 1964 by Knopf, and in 1962 by Hamilton in London. D. W. Brogan says in his brief preface that "the main story, however, is of ordinary life in Occupied France," which is a little bit like describing *Crime and Punishment* as a detective story. The book is called *Divided Loyalties,* and it is most moving that, after that trial by the everyday, naked, largely unfeeling, self-serving humans, in the end she did remain with her husband (who survived the war), and thus *French.* Nothing spectacular or even especially dramatic happens; but the completeness of detail really does approach the complicated texture of everyday life.

[I also think that Sidney Geist's recent book on Brancusi (Grossman, 1967) may be the most intelligent, best researched, and subtle book on a twentieth-century artist that I have ever read—but, thanks to Hilton Kramer's various references to it in the New York *Times,* I don't think it will be neglected.]

ROBERT MOTHERWELL

*

I find it hard to answer your question about neglected books. My reading has been pretty specialized for some years, and now so many books are in paperback that I can only wonder whether some of my favorite authors of the past—Carl Becker and Morris Cohen, for example—are being neglected. But in this uncertainty I might venture one suggestion for your list: Kenneth Burke's *Attitudes Toward History* (*New Republic,* 1937). I think young people in particular might find it as highly suggestive as I did when it came out some thirty years ago. But then I wonder.

HERBERT J. MULLER

*

The Last of the Just by André Schwarz-Bart (Atheneum, 1960) was zealously ac-

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claimed in sixteen languages at its birth, and since then has been almost totally neglected.

HENRY A. MURRAY

*

We utterly neglected Marguerite Young, Maude Hutchins, John Hawkes, Anna Kavan, Marianne Hauser, Jerzy Kosinski, the early Truman Capote, the early Kerouac, Nathanael West, Djuna Barnes, William Goyen.

In William Goyen reality, illusion and the dream are often fused as in poetry. Passages of such poetic harmonies occur in all his books. He is the poet of atmosphere, climate, mood and subtle exchanges.

All his books have a haunting, a lasting effect. *The House of Breath, In a Farther Country, Ghost and Flesh* (Random House, 1950, 1955 and 1952 respectively) are all of an extraordinarily even, sustained quality. He has his own distinctive tonalities and fluid grace.

A writer of exceptional style and subtlety is Marianne Hauser: *Dark Dominion* (Random House, 1947), *Choir Invisible* (Oblensky, 1958), *Prince Ishmael* (Stein and Day, 1963) are novels; *A Lesson in Music* (University of Texas Press, 1964) is a collection of short stories. When people will tire of noise, crassness and vulgarity, they will hear the truly contemporary complexities of Marianne Hauser's superimpositions. A new generation trained to imagery by the film may appreciate her offbeat characters and skill in portraying the uncommon.

ANAÏS NIN

*

Several of my candidates for overlooked and neglected books have in the last half-decade already found the appreciative readership and critical attention they long deserved: Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens*, Bernard Lonergan's *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, Denis de Rougemont's *Love in the Western World*, Josef Pieper's *Leisure, The Basis of Culture*, Piaget's studies in child psychology.

I have long thought that the poetry of Charles Péguy, particularly the long poem "Night," translated in the collection *God Speaks* (Pantheon, 1945), has been far too

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neglected—both for its political and for its contemplative power. Its appeal to mysticism and to politics will be received sympathetically today. But the entire intellectual scene is today so fluid that old landmarks sink and new possibilities arise suddenly and unpredictably. The "high culture" of the universities and of New York City intellectuals has entered upon a crisis of self-doubt and redefinition. The "high culture" of the theological world (Tillich, Niebuhr, Barth, Bultmann, Bonhoeffer) is also caught in a shifting seachange. We may expect to see all sorts of romantic, experimental, antipragmatic, mystical materials thrown up before our immediate attention: whatever dissolves recent longstanding conventions, it will be said, is good. But at the moment I incline toward little known (often untranslated) books that overturn our understanding of what the past was: Pierre Auberque's studies of Aristotle (*La Prudence chez Aristôte);* Lottin's summary digest, *La Morale Fondamentale* of his huge *La Psychologie et la morale aux XII^e et XIII^e siècles;* the long, phenomenological critique of Kant's *Critiques* executed by Joseph Maréchal; the revision of existentialism begun by Claude Lévi-Strauss; the symbolic interpretation of purportedly pragmatic political action (think of Kennedy, Nixon, and "the theatre of the streets") long ago undertaken by Kenneth Burke. We are in, I would think, for a serious and prolonged exploration of the intentions, symbols, myths, stories and "scenarios" that underlie pragmatic, empirical discourse, in politics and ethics and the choice of worldviews.

MICHAEL NOVAK

*

I've been thinking very seriously about your request. Perhaps *too* seriously: for I hesitated to indicate that any particular book was the *most* neglected book of the last twenty-five years. Could you state instead, in regard to my selection (James McConkey's *Crossroads)* that I consider it a somewhat neglected book, one which should reach a wider audience than it has? Not, I believe, that it has been totally neglected, because it hasn't; and, also, that

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might be quite insulting to Mr. McConkey. I think more attention should be paid to the book not only for its contents, which are fascinating, but for its adventuresome form—an "autobiographical novel." (It was published in 1968 by Dutton.)

JOYCE CAROL OATES

*

I have tried to make up my mind about a neglected book that falls within the major area of my interest—history and politics—but, alas, there is not one that I can honestly choose.

I do recall, however, a novel, *Something of a Hero,* by I. J. Kapstein, who is now professor of English at Brown University. It was published by Knopf in 1941. It was a remarkably evocative study of lower-middle-class American life which, even to a boy in England, strongly evoked the background of the American scene and the ambitious longings of those who wished to escape its clutches. I did mention this not long ago, in an article in the *Saturday Review,* and the response from readers was such that I suspect that I am far from being alone in my admiration for this neglected work.

J. H. PLUMB

*

I wish to reply to your inquiry about a neglected book as follows: A monograph by Heinrich Kottenhoff entitled *"Was ist richtiges Sehen mit Umkehrbrillen und in welchem Sinne stellt sich das Sehen um?"* (What is right seeing with inverting spectacles and in what sense is sight reinverted?) The monograph, well illustrated, covers 158 pages. It is a fundamental study elucidating the question of seeing with inverting spectacles, which is still almost universally misrepresented in contemporary literature. The book appeared as part of *Psychologia Universalis,* Vol. 5 (1961), and was published by Verlag Anton Hain K. G. Meisenheim am Glan.

MICHAEL POLANYI

*

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justly neglected book published during the past thirty years is today Morris Raphael Cohen's *Reason and Nature: An Essay on the Meaning of Scientific Method.* Issued first by Harcourt, Brace in 1931, it appeared in a much revised version with The Free Press in 1953.

Morris Cohen was the most critical analytic mind among all American philosophers. His appraisal and clarification of the intellectual issues in both the natural and the social sciences remains unsurpassed. He offers the sanest and most cogent interpretation of the meaning of scientific methods and of their limitations the twentieth century has seen. His sympathetic yet devastating analysis of the rivals and substitutes for reason, which have grown more aggressive during the past quarter-century, is of vital importance for every thinker today. Yet his voice of critical intelligence seems to have been almost completely forgotten in our present intellectual crises. Cohen wrote with such clarity and lucidity that his reminder of the values of thinking could be easily grasped by every educated man.

I might emphasize also his last volume, which is directly aimed at all those issues that we today find so relevant, his Carus Lectures on *The Meaning of Human History,* brought out by Open Court in 1947. After a brilliant treatment of all the philosophical issues involved in the understanding of history, Cohen concludes with a view of history that is both ethical and tragic. His insight could clarify the confusions of our own revolutionary feelings and passions.

JOHN HERMAN RANDALL, JR.

*

I certainly have a candidate for your list. *Madame Solario* was published, anonymously, by Viking in 1956. It was received with the highest critical acclaim; but the author, who was old when she wrote it, died shortly after without either revealing her identity or following it up. It has now fallen into complete neglect, and although Heinemann has lately reissued it in England, I have seen no recent comments on

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what is, to my mind, one of the finest novels of our century.

The setting is an Italian lake resort, the date about 1905; the vivid descriptions clearly come from memory, not research. The plot concerns the meeting of a brother and sister who have been separated for years by a family scandal, and whose effect on those involved with them is compared to the faults in the earth's crust that engender earthquakes.

The firmness, delicacy and restraint of the handling, the perceptiveness with which the quite large cast of characters is drawn, the way in which mounting tension is achieved without the least concession to melodrama, can stand comparison with Henry James and are achieved with more economy. It is high time this vanished comet reappeared in the literary sky.

After many inquiries in the publishing world, I learned the author was called Constance Huntington, that she wrote one or two novels in her youth which had no success, and after a long silence produced this last masterpiece. Perhaps she withheld her name from lack of confidence, perhaps because the theme was a daring one for a woman of her generation. Whether she was engaged on another book at the time of her death, I do not know.

MARY RENAULT

*

There is a book to which I have tried in vain to give some visibility that doesn't quite belong in the category you are seeking, but it is a book published several years ago that in spite of its subject matter has been *spurlos versänkt* so far as I can see. This is the autobiography of the black scholar, Horace Cayton, called *Long Old Road* and published in 1965 by Trident.

DAVID RIESMAN

*

For me the most neglected book is Jane Bowles's *Two Serious Ladies,* published by Knopf over a quarter-century ago when the author was twenty-four. Although twice reprinted, with good reviews, the work has had minimal circulation. Its promoters today are the same as yesterday, a staunch

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lunatic fringe for whom the book has become, so to speak, famous for being unknown. They find continual vitality in the insane charm, the ever-contagious invention, but also in the genetic influence of this novel. One trend of American fiction, in both style and matter (including much of Williams, Capote, McCullers, even Mrs. Bowles's husband Paul, and more recently Gavin Lambert, John Ashbery and James Schuyler) would never have been quite the same without *Two Serious Ladies.*

Like Erik Satie's very special coterie music which is finally being enjoyed by a larger audience, perhaps Jane Bowles's only novel will one day be more widely read. I sincerely hope so—but I will regret it, too. To share one's private discoveries with the public is a painful pleasure.

NED ROREM

*

The books I think most neglected—by men and minds they should most emphatically have influenced—are: *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* by Joseph Schumpeter (Harper, 1942) and *Capitalism and the Historians* by T. S. Ashton *et alia* (University of Chicago Press, 1954).

I omit fiction and verse, for I cannot think of a single work whose intellectual and political repercussions come within a light-year of the books named above.

LEO ROSTEN

P.S. *Call It Sleep* was a sweet book—so? *February Hill* by Victoria Lincoln or *Tortilla Flat* by Steinbeck were lovely to read and warm one's senses with, momentarily; but the measure of *significance,* for us all, dictates, surely, books of commanding political/economic leverage.

*

I think your "neglected books" feature is an excellent idea—although I'm not sure I have anything to contribute. At this point I find myself turning up more books that have received more attention than they deserve rather than recalling books that have been overlooked. Perhaps the main thing that has happened since the last time you did such a feature is the paperback

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explosion. The paperback publishers seem to be bringing out everything and anything. And I suppose that if a book has had paperback exposure it hardly ranks as "neglected." The only thing I can think of at present as having been neglected—or relatively so, since it too has had a paperback issue—is Gordon Zahn's *In Solitary Witness: The Life and Death of Franz Jägerstätter* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964). I think this is a beautiful book that should have had far more critical attention than it seems to have received.

THEODORE ROSZAK

*

Actually, my reading is too limited for a useful opinion; but I do think that Laurence Gould's book *Cold—The Record of an Antarctic Sledge Journey* (Brewer, Warren and Putnam, 1931) deserves a great deal more attention than it ever got.

PAUL B. SEARS

*

I am deliberately illiterate; I have not read one tenth of the published books. How can I neglect practically all books? There probably are good ones that get you nowhere. I have a feeling that you would be willing to neglect all, if you had set out to neglect all.

One answer is "neglect everything" and what I did many weeks last summer—enjoy myself in the hospital for many days. In fact, I don't see how you can do a good job of neglecting all, unless you simply read up on The Good Book.

That is one that gets neglected.

HARLOW SHAPLEY

*

I propose *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens* (Harcourt, Brace, 1931) as a book badly in need of revival, but I don't know how I would prove it's the most neglected book published in the last quarter-century. Steffens understood the American political system far better than any other writer I know of—whether political scientist, economist or other specialist. He recognized the role of corruption in the development of the system and it is definitely too bad that a reporter of his gifts, insight and determination is not available to work on the in-

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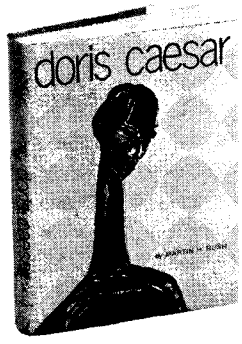

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dustrial-military complex. Someone should now write *The Shame of the Nation. Life* magazine has done some reasonably effective muckraking on the Mafia and the public is completely apathetic. If Americans could recognize that the piecemeal muckraking of *Life* magazine and *Look* magazine corroborates the theory developed by Steffens in his autobiography, they might be shocked into some meaningful awareness of the alienation of the young and the growing contempt for the system among many sensitive people.

JOHN R. SILBER

*

After a short, sharp struggle between my modesty and my candor, both enormous, virtually irresistible forces, candor has won by a narrow margin. I am forced to designate my own book *Biology and Man,* published at the beginning of last year by Harcourt, Brace and World. Having lost the bout, modesty must further suffer: the book says much that urgently needs to be said and is not said so well, if at all, elsewhere. It qualifies as neglected because in its first six months it failed to earn an advance so modest as to verge on insult.

GEORGE GAYLORD SIMPSON

*

Neglected books. I should like to select one or two which go back further than the last quarter of a century. In fact, to the twenties. These are *Futility* and *The Polyglots* (Duffield, 1922 and 1925, respectively) by William Gerhardie. These novels had great critical acclaim when they first appeared but never reached a substantial public. On the other hand, they had more effect upon two generations of English writers than any I can think of. It is very hard to think of a single subject on which Evelyn Waugh, Graham Greene, Anthony Powell and I would be likely to agree. But we have all expressed in public our indebtedness to Gerhardie. The same applies to writers much younger, as can be seen from recent critical articles by Olivia Manning and Michael Holroyd, the biographer of Lytton Strachey.

Gerhardie was born in old St. Petersburg, of English parents who left Russia at the time of the Revolution. He himself was brought up bilingual in English and Russian and was the first person in England actively to interpret Chekhov to his fellow writers. His own work was, in fact, deeply influenced by Chekhov, to whom, however, he added a very English type of comic absurdity. His books are like nothing else in the language, poetic, touching, silly, shameless and penitential. He is still alive at seventy-four, and there is time to repair an injustice before he dies.

C. P. SNOW

*

The first book that comes to my mind was published a little earlier than the period of your survey. It is a volume of short stories by the poet and critic Laura Riding called *Progress of Stories* (Random House, 1937). If I had a second choice, but this book is even older (it was published in London by Methuen in 1931),

---

Jim Harrison, *Locations.** I choose this book of poetry as the most neglected book in the quarter-century.
Following the principle that armies use when they choose one body to represent the Unknown Soldier,
this book may represent all the books of verse into which a man has poured his energy and intelligence . . .
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only to see them pass unnoticed. For their authors do not belong to a clique or set,
and as everyone knows, poetry doesn't pay.

LOUIS SIMPSON

* Norton, 1968.

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it would be that unclassifiable book of imaginary history by Olaf Stapledon called *Last and First Men.*

SUSAN SONTAG

*

I wish I had a candidate for the "most neglected book." Actually some of my own might qualify if we didn't have to insert the word "unjustly" in there. But when I stretch my brains trying to think of a splendid book that has received no attention, I can't come up with one. Why don't you ask us sometime for a list of books that have had altogether too *much* attention for what they offer? Then we could all take out our hatchets and have fun.

WALLACE STEGNER

*

The one book it has been my privilege to read and hardly anyone else's, a book that received no reviews that I can recall and that few people know about, is Sanford Friedman's novel, *A Haunted Woman* (Dutton, 1968).

MARK STRAND

At a time when topicality and innovation seem to be everything to many readers, some reminder should be given that such a masterpiece as Caroline Gordon's *Aleck Maury, Sportsman* (Scribner's, 1934) still exists. Those who read it thirty years ago can hardly have forgotten the superb craftsmanship, the profound character drawing, the poetry the novel finally achieves in the meaningful relationship of all its elements.

PETER TAYLOR

*

I would say Calder Willingham's *Gates of Hell.* This book of fragments, published by Vanguard in 1951, did the whole Black Comedy number of the 1960s—only it did it first and funnier. Much in the manner that Dali's paintings of the late fifties ran through most of the styles, from "Pop" to "Op" to "Concept," that would succeed abstract expressionism a few years later. It doesn't do to be too far ahead of your times, I guess. Ten minutes seems to be time enough.

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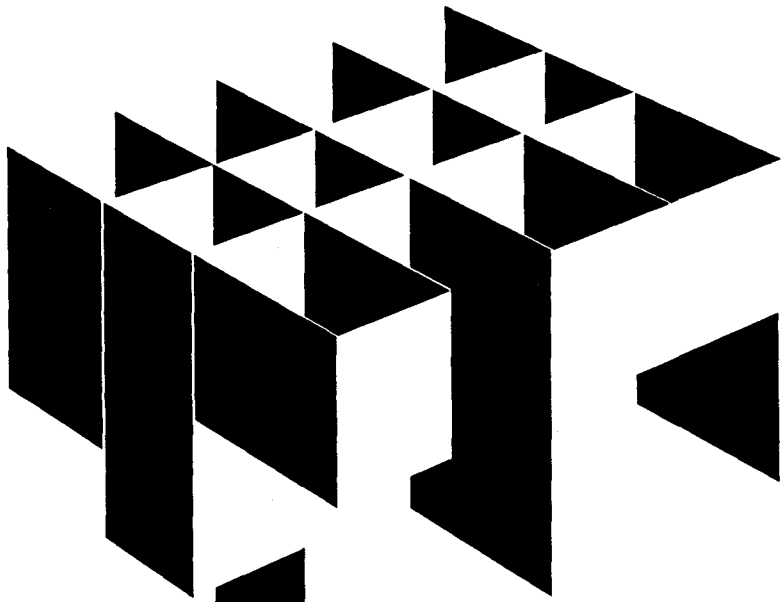

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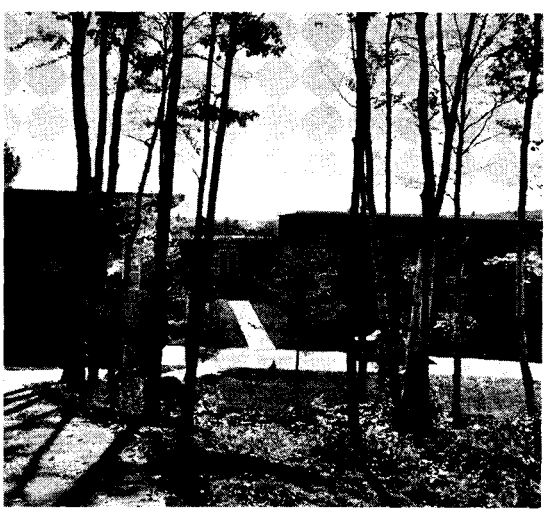

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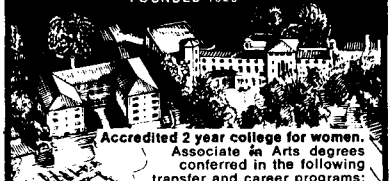

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The Reader Replies

THE READER REPLIES *carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles that have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20009. Because of space limitations we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.*
—EDITOR

I would not suppose that Richard Huelsenbeck's confession in his "Reflections on Leaving America for Good," in your Winter issue, could serve to express the sentiments of the majority of Americans. I certainly hope not. But I was moved as I read; I was threatened; I was shamed; and I was reminded of some feelings that I have yet to face squarely.

I found him calling into question some of the carrots that have been set before me, nibbles of which I have learned to love so much (while loathing my love for them). He reminded me that one can get "hooked" on carrots.

I found him pointing to a distinction (although not a dichotomy) between being competent and accomplishing something, a distinction I had sensed at some point in the past. Somehow he reminded me of my feeling immediately upon the successful defense of my doctoral dissertation. In that moment it burst upon me that I now had a loving wife; healthy, happy children; a comfortable home; a good job affording an adequate income; and a Ph.D. Everything I had strived for. I realized then and am reminded now that "achievement" as usually defined does not produce satisfaction.

Then I recalled the lines from Emerson that stirred me so when I was an adolescent:

> Who so would be a man, must be a nonconformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness [or success], but must explore if it be goodness [success]. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.

But I am not even sure of my own mind, and Huelsenbeck reminds me of this, too. "A hippie, a doctor and a moneymaking clever man." A rich, scholarly, free spirit—contributing to the welfare of man. I can't decide.

There have been times when I have wanted to escape to my own Switzerland—maybe a small college out of the mainstream, away from the pressure. But, like Huelsenbeck, I would look back and know that I had not escaped. I don't think that's the solution for me right now.

As I read, I wondered at a man who was an Established Success throwing in the towel because he hated so much of what he was about. Then I realized that he was saying things that I, at twenty-nine and the beginning of my career, would say if I possessed the insight and verbal skills of Huelsenbeck. I wished that I had never read his "Reflections."

BEN ROMINE
Durham, North Carolina

* * *

Readers who know anything about the history of mountaineering will be surprised at Gerald W. Johnson's error on the first page of his essay, "Program for the Mini-Intellectual" [AS: Winter, 1969-70], in attributing to Hillary the famous "because it's there" remark (the usual form rather than "because it was there," as Mr. Johnson has it) instead of to George Leigh Mallory. Mallory, who with Irvine disappeared in 1924 within a thousand feet of the summit of Everest, was too illustrious a mountaineer not to be credited with the most famous remark ever made about why men climb mountains.

FRANK E. GAEBELEIN
Arlington, Virginia

MR. JOHNSON replies: *Peccavi,* and by the besetting sin of newspaper writers, failing to verify a quote.

* * *

The Housman essay on Swinburne [AS: Winter, 1969-70] was worth a ten-year subscription to the SCHOLAR. Congratulations and thanks.

HERMAN WOUK
Washington, D.C.

* * *

Every congratulation on Mr. Lerner's article ["Respectable Bigotry," AS: Autumn, 1969]. His comments on the uptight bigot found with such melancholy regularity in the Newlac (New Left-Academic) complex are most refreshing. I hope he'll give us additional commentaries soon.

RICHARD M. SCAMMON, Director
Elections Research Center

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I should like to say to Anthony Burgess about "Letter from Europe" [AS: Autumn, 1969]:

"Mr. Burgess, you make me angry. You grubbed for learning, but why hold it against the kids who protest about what they don't like? Are you somehow better because you dared not open your mouth or slow down on the grind? You failed to see an imminent end to the world when you did your grubbing. (How could you? The bomb hadn't even been thought of.) But why must you be so callous about today's students who have lived all their years in the shadow of the bomb? The affluence of their parents has given them the leisure to think and feel and absorb the atmosphere of doom. Some are using that leisure to try to awaken their grubbing-after-affluence parents to the thunder of the approaching storms. Praise be to whatever gods there be for creating that beautiful by-product of obscene affluence: leisure time for melancholy thought!

"Dear Mr. Burgess, you are occupied with pleasant work that supports your little family on an island that lets you avoid contributing more taxes than you choose to what's left of the culture that allowed you to grub for your precious education. Consider the kids whose parents supply them with so much luxury that they deprive them of any feeling of urgency to prepare for an immediate future. (As for the distant future, which of the kids even expects it?) And consider those kids whose parents are working for more luxuries than they know how to *enjoy*. They can see that their parents are hellbent to live out their lives on the treadmill of the Puritan work ethic at a time when that ethic is not only unnecessary but downright destructive of our environment. At a time when the self-sanctifying working man moonlights or lets his wife hold down a job to acquire the things that Madison Avenue tells him he should have, the students (How I wish *all* the kids were using their time for this!) are protesting the war in Vietnam, the double-talking lies of every branch of government, business and even education, the irrelevance of their education, the growing mass of the unemployed and the unemployable, the hunger in this country of affluence, the—well—any number of things right down to the way we still treat those noble native Americans!

"If these kids are using their leisure to try to turn the tide from materialism and seemingly inevitable destruction, give them praise, Mr. Burgess. I envy them their guts!"

MRS. WILLIAM MONSON
Fair Oaks, California

MR. BURGESS replies: No, I'm not better because I used the university as a university is intended to be used. I just happened to be more logical, that's all. If I wished to protest, I would have been mad to go on spending hard-earned money on fees for which I was getting no return. Moreover, I did more than open my mouth. I helped to find homes for Jewish refugees from Germany; I tried to raise money to help the Republican cause in Spain. And, look, as far as "the end of the world" was concerned, it seemed a great deal more imminent when the bombs were actually dropping on my country and on my city.

What, by the way, are these "approaching storms" you refer to?

As for the irrelevance about my "pleasant work," I have reasons for living where I live which have little to do with Mrs. Monson's snide allegations.

I'm sick of the unwillingness of protestors to equip themselves with the knowledge, particularly the knowledge of language, that would enable them to change their world. I'm sick of the slick slogans, the conformism, the lack of individualism. I've worked on American campuses and know what I'm talking about. Dropping out is too negative to achieve anything.

Let this sweet American lady clear her mind of cant and encourage her beloved protestors to do the same.

* * *

J. Bronowski's article, "Protest—Past and Present," [AS: Autumn, 1969], constitutes the most lucid, graceful, succinct expression on the subject that I have read. It ought to be reprinted and disseminated as widely as possible. If I had the means I should print thousands.

If only the establishment had the illumination of such wisdom!

SYLVIA R. DAY
Woodstock, New York

* * *

Mrs. Elizabeth Cless calls her proposal for the education of women in the Autumn, 1969, issue of the SCHOLAR "modest," but it seems to me that "inadequate" would state the case more accurately. It is easy enough to agree with her criticisms of the present educational system—it is created by men for men, and women, if they are admitted into it, must play the game as men—but one wishes that in her "proposal" she did not so thoroughly and complacently accept the American social status quo. Her argument seems to be: Girls between sixteen and twenty-five are so "physiologically determined to perpetuate the human race" that

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their intellects suffer, *ergo* let them be married immediately upon completing their B.A., if not before, reproduce feverishly until age twenty-six and thereupon settle into housewifery and station-wagon driving with occasional ventures into the League of Women Voters until they reach the age (sometime after thirty) at which their instincts have calmed down enough for their intellects to function. One might imagine Mrs. Cless's ideal young woman presenting herself at a graduate department of physics, announcing to the chairman, "I have not been near a laboratory for fifteen years, but I have a sterling record in the local P.T.A. and I wash the cleanest diaper in town. Give me credit for my experience! I am a woman!"

If it is the urge to reproduce that is really predominant in women around twenty, how shall we explain away the popularity of the Pill? Should we not call that instinct by its rightful name and admit the fact that in a growing number of educated women the desire to have children is likely to come nearer to age thirty? It has not been my experience that, as Mrs. Cless claims, being in love impairs a woman's ability to learn. (Is it because I teach literature rather than mathematics?) Many of my friends have told me that they experienced some of their most creative periods while pregnant or just after having a baby, and I myself found the combination of writing my Ph.D. thesis while twice pregnant an excellent one.

The problems of the educated woman who wishes to pursue a career, raise a family and retain her "femininity" are very real indeed. For some careers, possibly administrative ones, the solution proposed by Mrs. Cless might be feasible. But a scientist, scholar or artist, unless she has time to read and study on her own, cannot afford to "drop out" for ten or fifteen years. Let us address ourselves to such problems as the pressing need for day-care centers (to benefit *not only* middle-class women) and the possibility of income tax deductions for the expense of household help rather than glibly accepting a necessary ten to fifteen year confinement within the walls of the home. As for the question of "femininity," I too am anti-Professor Higgins. The world needs feminine intellects, feminine sensibilities, womanly and motherly love, not just an imitation of their masculine counterparts. But oh, Americans, why must *das ewig Weibliche* be forever incarnated for us in the image of Mom?

MARY ANN WITT
Wellesley College

MRS. CLESS replies: Mrs. Witt's assertion that an author's definition of an existing American social situation is proof of personal "acceptance" of that condition cannot have been made seriously. We may move on to the matters which obviously touch Mrs. Witt deeply.

That girls between sixteen and twenty-five are at the peak of their reproductive cycle is not my "argument"; it is a medical fact that Mrs. Witt may not desire but that cannot be argued. She ignores my qualification that *if* many intelligent women marry young and prefer to concentrate on child-bearing and child-rearing for a number of years *then* the opportunity for return to formal study cannot be denied them solely because of this personal choice. Mrs. Witt's captivating vision of the conversation in a graduate department of physics also should not purport to reflect my thesis. Let's move that P.T.A. president out of physics and into sociology, shall we, Mrs. Witt?

Much emotion, such as Mrs. Witt's, surrounding "the woman question" arises from generalizations about women, as if all females were alike. One academic pattern cannot fit all people. "A Modest Proposal for the Educating of Women" focuses on the importance of flexibility in academic procedures and processes, so that every able woman may tailor an educational pattern for the particular times in her life when serious study is most effective for her. It is good that women like Mrs. Witt exist—women who can combine the trauma of young love with high intellectual performance, two pregnancies with the grinding demands of a doctoral dissertation. These women need not and will not drop out of formal education while raising children, despite the lack of professional child-care and necessary tax reform. However, every woman does not have Mrs. Witt's stamina. Other women must be permitted other options.

* * *

If Professor Eble ["The Scholarly Life," AS: Winter, 1969-70] really wants to know why William Dean Howells is dull, or, for that matter, why he and you and I have our manuscripts returned with rejection slips, let him contemplate, by contrast, A. E. Housman's masterly essay on Swinburne in the same issue. It shows to what heights literary criticism can rise in the hands of a genius. For all I know, everything that Housman had to say about Swinburne may have been said before (or since), but surely never with such clarity and wit nor in anything like Housman's rollercoaster style.

C. STANLEY OGILVY
Hamilton College

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